CASANOVA'S MEMOIRS

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GIACOMO CASANOVA

His Life and Memoirs

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HIS LIFE AND MEMOIRS

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&

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GIACOMO CASANOVA

His Life and Memoirs

CHAPTER X

Paris Once More: the Man of Affairs

Once more, then, I was in Paris, which I ought to regard as my fatherland, since I could return no more to that land which gave me birth: an unworthy country, yet, in spite of all, ever dear to me, possibly on account of early impressions and early prejudices, or possibly because the beauties of Venice are really unmatched in the world. But mighty Paris is a place of good luck or ill, as one takes it, and it was my part to catch the favouring gale.

Paris was not wholly new to me, as my readers know I had spent two years there, but I must confess that, having then no other aim than to pass the time pleasantly, I had merely devoted myself to pleasure and enjoyment. Fortune, to whom I had paid no court, had not opened to me her golden doors; but now I felt that I must treat her more reverently, and attach myself to the throng of her favoured sons whom she loads with her gifts. I understood now that the nearer one draws to the sun the more one feels the warmth of its rays. I saw that to attain my end I should have to employ all my mental and physical talents, that I must make friends of the great, and take the cue from all whom I found it to be my interest to please. To follow the plans suggested by these thoughts, I saw that I must avoid what is called bad company, that I must give up my old habits and pretensions, which would be sure to make me enemies, who would have no scruple in representing me as a trifler, and not fit to be trusted with affairs of any importance.

I think I thought wisely, and the reader, I hope, will be of the same opinion. "I will be reserved," said I, "in what I say and what I do, and thus I shall get a reputation for discretion which will bring its reward."

I was in no anxiety on the score of present needs, as I could reckon on a monthly allowance of a hundred crowns, which my adopted father, the good and generous M. de Bragadin, sent me, and I found this sum sufficient in the meanwhile, for with a little

self-restraint one can live cheaply at Paris, and cut a good figure at the same time. I was obliged to wear a good suit of clothes, and to have a decent lodging; for in all large towns the most important thing is outward show, by which at the beginning one is always judged. My anxiety was only for the pressing needs of the moment — for to speak the truth I had neither clothes nor linen — in a word, nothing.

If my relations with the French ambassador are recalled, it will be found natural that my first idea was to address myself to him, as I knew him sufficiently well to reckon on his serving me.

Being perfectly certain that the porter would tell me that my lord was engaged, I took care to have a letter, and in the morning I went to the Palais Bourbon. The porter took my letter, and I gave him my address and returned home.

Wherever I went I had to tell the story of my escape from The Leads. This became a service almost as tiring as the flight itself had been, as it took me two hours to tell my tale, without the slightest bit of fancy-work; but I had to be polite to the curious inquirers, and to pretend that I believed them moved by the most affectionate interest in my welfare. In general, the best way to please is to take the benevolence of all with whom one has relation for granted.

I supped at Silvia's, and as the evening was quieter than the night before, I had time to congratulate myself on all the friendship they showed me. The girl was, as I have said, fifteen years old, and I was in every way charmed with her. I complimented the mother on the good results of her education, and I did not even think of guarding myself from falling a victim to her charms. I had taken so lately such well-founded and philosophical resolutions, and I was not yet sufficiently at my ease to value the pain of being tempted. I left at an early hour, impatient to see what kind of an answer the minister had sent me. I had not long to wait, and I received a short letter appointing a meeting for two o'clock in the afternoon. It may be guessed that I was punctual, and my reception by his excellency was most flattering. M. de Bernis expressed his pleasure at seeing me after my fortunate escape, and at being able to be of service to me. He told me that M ** M ** had informed him of my escape, and he had flattered himself that the first person I should go and see in Paris would be himself. He showed me the letters from M ** M **

relating to my arrest and escape, but all the details in the latter were purely imaginary and had no foundation in fact. M ** M ** was not to blame, as she could only write what she had heard, and it was not easy for anyone besides myself to know the real circumstances of my escape. The charming nun said that, no longer buoyed up by the hope of seeing either of the men who alone had made her in love with life, her existence had become a burden to her, and she was unfortunate in not being able to take any comfort in religion. "C ** C ** often comes to see me," she said, "but I grieve to say she is not happy with her husband."

I told M. de Bernis that the account of my flight from The Leads, as told by our friend, was wholly inaccurate, and I would therefore take the liberty of writing out the whole story with the minutest details. He challenged me to keep my word, assuring me that he would send a copy to M ** M **, and at the same time, with the utmost courtesy, he put a packet of a hundred louis in my hand, telling me that he would think what he could do for me, and would advise me as soon as he had any communication to make.

Thus furnished with ample funds, my first care was for my dress; and this done I went to work, and in a week sent my generous protector the result, giving him permission to have as many copies printed as he liked, and to make any use he pleased of it to interest in my behalf such persons as might be of service to me.

Three weeks after, the minister summoned me to say that he had spoken of me to M. Erizzo, the Venetian ambassador, who had nothing to say against me, but for fear of embroiling himself with the State Inquisitors declined to receive me. Not wanting anything from him, his refusal did me no harm. M. de Bernis then told me that he had given a copy of my history to Madame la Marquise de Pompadour, and he promised to take the first opportunity of presenting me to this all-powerful lady. "You can present yourself, my dear Casanova," added his excellence. "to the Duc de Choiseul, and M. de Boulogne, the comptroller. You will be well received, and with a little wit you ought to be able to make good use of the letters. He himself will give you the clue, and you will see that *he who listens obtains*. Try to invent some useful plan for the royal exchequer; don't let it be

complicated or chimerical, and if you don't write it out at too great length I will give you my opinion on it."

I left the minister in a pleased and grateful mood, but extremely puzzled to find a way of increasing the royal revenue. I knew nothing of finance, and after racking my brains all that I could think of was new methods of taxation; but all my plans were either absurd or certain to be unpopular, and I rejected them all on consideration.

Casanova starts on his round of calls, beginning with the Duc de Choiseul, then prime minister, who receives him with the aloofness of the grand seigneur, *but displays interest in the story of his flight. Choiseul sends him on to M. de Boulogne, the comptroller-general, where he meets the famous financier Paris-Duverney (the Memoirs persist in calling him "Paris du Vernai"), who had already done so much for French finance. Just then he was in need of twenty million francs for his military school, which he wanted to raise without taxation or treasury loan. Casanova at once announces he has a scheme which would give the king the interest of a hundred million without costing the Crown a penny. Although he maintains that at the moment he had not the slightest idea how this was to be accomplished — prompted, we may infer, by his "genius" — it is obvious that the scheme he had in mind was that of the* banco lotto, *which was very popular at that time, not only in Italy, where it continues to this day, but in other continental countries. It was the day of lotteries. Two, of foreign origin, were already established in Paris.*

Although Casanova pretends the idea came to him as an inspiration, the fact is that he merely took over and espoused for his purposes a plan already worked out by the Calsabigi brothers, natives of Leghorn and experts in the lottery system. The older of the two brothers, Ranieri, might, and perhaps did, serve as a model for the new Casanovian avatar. Mathematician, financier, gambler, man of letters, [1] *indefatigable promoter of schemes, he appears, like Beaumarchais, a type of the complete adventurer of the eighteenth century — a type which, for all its depravity, compares not unfavourably with the modern profiteer and* arriviste.

The rôle played by Casanova in launching this scheme is made

[1] *Ranieri Calsabigi, besides translating into French for Madame de Pompadour the complete works of Metastasio, composed the libretti for the* Orpheus *and* Alcestes *of Gluck. In this connection it is interesting to recall that Casanova was also librettist in his leisure moments.*

plausible by the fact that Ranieri Calsabigi, the promoter and moving spirit of the whole affair, was confined to his bed by a chronic skin-disease and had to rely on his brother for all outside work. Under these conditions, rather than risk a dangerous rivalry with a man like Casanova, he may well have thought it to his interest to effect one of those combinazioni *dear to the heart of his countrymen, whereby the Venetian became partner in the scheme. At any rate, it is an established fact that Casanova was officially appointed one of the directors or receivers of the royal lottery. According to the Memoirs he was granted a salary of four thousand francs a year and allotted six receiving offices, five of which he promptly sold for two thousand francs each. With this sum as capital, he furnished his remaining office in the Rue St. Denis very elegantly and announced that every winning ticket bearing his signature would be paid within twenty-four hours at his office. As officially the lottery was not obliged to pay out before the end of a week after the drawing, Casanova's office was besieged by clients.*

The first drawing took place on April 18th, 1758, and proved a huge success, several of the big prizes falling on Paris. According to Casanova, the general receipts were two million francs, of which six hundred thousand went to the state and twenty thousand into his own pocket. There were four more drawings that year, and ten the following. One of the means for popularising the lottery is worthy of Casanova and may be of his invention. Each of the ninety numbers employed in the lotto *was given the name of a deserving young girl, with a bonus of two hundred francs for her if the number was among the five drawn.*

In a few months Casanova was at the top of the ladder, and Paris was at his feet:

In all the great houses I went to, and at the theatres, as soon as I was seen, everybody gave me money, asking me to lay it out as I liked and to send them the tickets, as, so far, the lottery was strange to most people. I thus got into the way of carrying about me tickets of all sorts, or rather of all prices, which I gave to people to choose from, going home in the evening with my pockets full of gold. This was an immense advantage to me, a kind of privilege which I enjoyed to the exclusion of the other receivers who were not in society, and did not drive a carriage like myself — no small point in one's favour, in a large town, where men are judged by the state they keep. I found I was thus able to go into any society, and to get credit anywhere.

I had hardly been a month in Paris when my brother Francis, with whom I had parted in 1752, arrived from Dresden with Madame Silvestre. He had been at Dresden for four years, taken up with the pursuit of his art, having copied all the battle-pieces in the Elector's Gallery. We were both of us glad to meet once more, but on my offering to see what my great friends could do for him with the Academicians, he replied with all an artist's pride that he was much obliged to me, but would rather not have any other patrons than his talents. "The French," said he, "have rejected me once, and I am far from bearing them ill-will on that account, for I would reject myself now if I were what I was then; but with their love of genius I reckon on a better reception this time."

His confidence pleased me, and I complimented him upon it, for I have always been of the opinion that true merit begins by doing justice to itself.

Francis painted a fine picture, which, on being exhibited at the Louvre, was received with applause. The Academy bought the picture for twelve thousand francs, my brother became famous, and in twenty-six years he made almost a million of money; but in spite of that, foolish expenditure, his luxurious style of living, and two bad marriages, were the ruin of him.

Although the great political revolution was still three decades off, Paris was already — had been for some time, in fact — in the throes of a social upheaval, which, though discernible for some time to the attentive observer, had only come to a head after the death of the Grand Monarch. All of a sudden the immutable strata of French society slid out of place, crumbled, collapsed, and intermingled, all except the hardest outer crust, on which the red heels strutted and pirouetted as if nothing were going on below the surface.

The first tangible result of this disruption and fermentation within was the formation of a Fourth Estate between the three officially recognised, a dangerous swampy region which had risen from the depth and was now working its way upwards. For the present it was wedged above the great middle stratum of French bourgeoisie, whose vigorous fibre had been sapped and drained too deeply by the blood-letting of the famous Revocation of 1685 and was taking on some sort of consistency, like the abscess hardening under the tooth. When finally, a hundred years later, it was officially recognised and

classified, it had already assumed such formidable dimensions that, socially speaking, it appeared a hemisphere and was so designated.

Into this half-world, this demi-monde, *in formation, Casanova plunges and splashes with delight. He is now in his proper element. Hobnobbing with every class of society, he is really at home,* en famille, chez soi, *with Silvia Baletti and her associates, the Italian Comedians. His gratitude and affection for Silvia, one of the greatest actresses of her day, who from the first had helped and bemothered him, was so profound that he formally promised to marry her daughter, Manon Baletti. The story of Manon Baletti, the only official fiancée Casanova ever had, is not in the Memoirs, where her name is only mentioned on and off and the betrothal alluded to as a* fait accompli, *but it is in her letters.*[1] *The story is a pathetic one, for Manon's love, admiration, and confidence in her Giacomo are boundless. She is well educated, a good musician, a charming letter-writer, and, to judge by her portrait, unusually pretty. But the trouble is that she loves too well and makes no concealment of the fact. When finally, after a long period of waiting for her fiancé to redeem his word, seeing it is hopeless to wait any longer, she breaks off the engagement, Casanova is seized with rage and remorse.*

His outburst at the time is very characteristic. It is true he has given Manon every provocation, never denying himself a fancy. At the moment he is philandering with Esther, or asserts he is, and is even contemplating marriage, he says. But the fact that his betrothed, the woman who is his by right of heritage and family agreement, his promessa, *in fact, has given him the slip is a bitter blow. For in the recesses of that curious heart of his there lingers, almost unconsciously, the Latin sense of domesticity, the vision of the ultimate haven in which to cast anchor, the mirage of a hearth and family. Manon's "betrayal," as he calls it, is a rude awakening to the fact that socially he has become an outcast, even among his own kind. Hence his fury and resentment.*

For the moment, however, he is still in the heyday of his social triumphs. Foremost among these must be counted his conquest of a

[1] *See Aldo Rava:* Lettere di donne a Giacomo Casanova (*Milan, 1912*). *A police note of 1753 suggests that during his first visit to Paris, Silvia was more than kind to her promising compatriot:* "Mademoiselle Silvia vit avec Casanova, italien, qu'on dit fils d'une comédienne. C'est elle qui l'entretient" (*quoted by Samaran*).

somewhat ancient, but socially and intellectually distinguished person, the Marquise d'Urfé, a great lady and former friend of the Regent. Having in her old age become immersed in occult sciences, her salon had become the rendezvous of all the famous quacks and charlatans, who in this "Age of Reason" flourished exceedingly. The most eminent of these, the celebrated Count of St. Germain, a forerunner of Cagliostro's, who was believed to have discovered the Elixir of Life, became from the outset Casanova's bête noire. *The hatred with which this mysterious personage inspires him indicates something more than mere professional jealousy. It rather suggests that it was St. Germain, and not Casanova, who got the best of their encounters.*

The introduction to Madame d'Urfé was the result of a boon-companionship between Casanova and her nephew, that amiable scapegrace the Comte de la Tour d'Auvergne, with whom he had fought a duel on one occasion and on whom he later accomplished a magic cure for sciatica. This is the story as he tells it:

Four or five days after, when I had almost forgotten the farce, I heard a carriage stopping at my door, and looking out of my window saw M. de la Tour d'Auvergne skipping nimbly out of the carriage.

"You were sure of success, then," said he, "as you did not come to see me the day after your astounding operation."

"Of course I was sure, but if I had not been too busy you would have seen me, for all that."

"May I take a bath?"

"No, don't bathe till you feel quite well."

"Very good. Everybody is in a state of astonishment at your feat, as I could not help telling the miracle to all my acquaintances. There are certainly some sceptics who laugh at me, but I let them talk."

"You should have kept your own counsel; you know what Paris is like. Everybody will be considering me as a master-quack."

"Not at all, not at all. I have come to ask a favour of you."

"What's that?"

"I have an aunt who enjoys a great reputation for her skill in the occult sciences, especially in alchemy. She is a woman of wit, very rich, and sole mistress of her fortune; in short, knowing her will do you no harm. She longs to see you, for she pretends to know you, and says that you are not what you seem. She has

entreated me to take you to dine with her, and I hope you will accept the invitation. Her name is the Marchioness d'Urfé."

I did not know this lady, but the name of d'Urfé caught my attention directly, as I knew all about the famous Anne d'Urfé who flourished towards the end of the seventeenth century. The lady was the widow of her great-grandson, and on marrying into the family became a believer in the mystical doctrines of a science in which I was must interested, though I gave it little credit. I therefore replied that I should be glad to go, but on the condition that the party should not exceed the count, his aunt, and myself.

"She has twelve people every day to dinner, and you will find yourself in the company of the best society in Paris."

"My dear fellow, that's exactly what I don't want; for I hate to be thought a magician, which must have been the effect of the tales you have told."

"Oh, no! not at all; your character is well known, and you will find yourself in the society of people who have the greatest regard for you."

"Are you sure of that?"

"The Duchess de l'Oragnais told me that, four or five years ago, you were often to be seen at the Palais-Royal, and that you used to spend whole days with the Duchess d'Orleans; Madame de Boufflers, Madame de Blots, and Madame de Melfort have also talked to me about you. You are wrong not to keep up your old acquaintances. I know at least a hundred people of the first rank who are suffering from the same malady as that of which you cured me, and would give the half of their goods to be cured."

De la Tour d'Auvergne had reason on his side, but as I knew his wonderful cure had been due to a singular coincidence, I had no desire to expose myself to public ridicule. I therefore told him that I did not wish to become a public character, and that he must tell Madame d'Urfé that I would have the honour of calling on her in strict privacy only, and that she might tell me the day and hour on which I should kneel before her.

The same evening I had a letter from the count making an appointment at the Tuileries for the morrow; he was to meet me there, and take me to his aunt's to dinner. No one else was to be present.

The next day we met each other as had been arranged, and went to see Madame d'Urfé, who lived on the Quai des Theatins, on the same side as the Hôtel Bouillon.

Madame d'Urfé, a woman advanced in years, but still handsome, received me with all the courtly grace of the Court of the Regency. We spent an hour and a half in indifferent conversation, occupied in studying each other's character. Each was trying to get at the bottom of the other.

I had not much trouble in playing the part of the unenlightened, for such, in point of fact, was my state of mind, and Madame d'Urfé unconsciously betrayed the desire of showing her learning; this put me at my ease, for I felt sure I could make her pleased with me if I succeeded in making her pleased with herself.

At two o'clock the same dinner that was prepared every day for twelve was served for us three. Nothing worthy of note (so far as conversation went) was done at dinner, as we talked commonplace after the manner of people of fashion.

After the dessert Tour d'Auvergne left us to go and see the Prince de Turenne, who was in a high fever, and after he was gone Madame d'Urfé began to discuss alchemy and magic, and all the other branches of her beloved science, or rather infatuation. When we got on to the *magnum opus*, and I asked her if she knew the nature of the first matter, it was only her politeness which prevented her from laughing; but controlling herself, she replied graciously that she already possessed the philosopher's stone, and that she was acquainted with all the operations of the work. She then showed me a collection of books which had belonged to the great d'Urfé, and Renée of Savoy, his wife; but she had added to it manuscripts which had cost her more than a hundred thousand francs. Paracelsus was her favourite author, and according to her he was neither man, woman, nor hermaphrodite, and had the misfortune to poison himself with an overdose of his panacea, or universal medicine. She showed me a short manuscript in French, where the great work was clearly explained. She told me that she did not keep it under lock and key, because it was written in a cypher, the secret of which was known only to herself.

"You do not believe, then, in steganography."

"No, sir, and if you would like it, I will give you this which has been copied from the original."

"I accept it, madam, with all the more gratitude in that I know its worth."

From the library we went into the laboratory, at which I was truly astonished. She showed me matter that had been in the furnace for fifteen years, and was to be there for four or five years more. It was a powder of projection which was to transform instantaneously all metals into the finest gold. She showed me a pipe by which the coal descended to the furnace, keeping it always at the same heat. The lumps of coal were impelled by their own weight at proper intervals and in equal quantities, so that she was often three months without looking at the furnace, the temperature remaining the same the whole time. The cinders were removed by another pipe, most ingeniously contrived, which also answered the purpose of a ventilator.

The calcination of mercury was mere child's play to this wonderful woman. She showed me the calcined matter, and said that whenever I liked she would instruct me as to the process. I next saw the Tree of Diana of the famous Taliamed, whose pupil she was. His real name was Maillot, and according to Madame d'Urfé he had not, as was supposed, died at Marseilles, but was still alive; "and," added she, with a slight smile, "I often get letters from him. If the Regent of France," said she, "had listened to me he would be alive now. He was my first friend; he gave me the name of Egeria, and he married me to M. d'Urfé."

Casanova, who has primed himself with all the galimatias *of the secret arts, is soon in high favour with the marquise, at whose table he is a constant guest.*

The most enjoyable dinner I had was with Madame de Gergi, who came with the famous adventurer, known by the name of the Count de St. Germain. This individual, instead of eating, talked from the beginning of the meal to the end, and I followed his example in one respect as I did not eat, but listened to him with the greatest attention. It may safely be said that as a conversationalist he was unequalled.

St. Germain gave himself out for a marvel and always aimed at exciting amazement, which he often succeeded in doing. He was scholar, linguist, musician, and chemist, good-looking, and a perfect ladies' man. For a while he gave them paints and cosmetics; he flattered them, not that he would make them

young again (which he modestly confessed was beyond him), but that their beauty would be preserved by means of a wash which, he said, cost him a lot of money, but which he gave away freely.

He had contrived to gain the favour of Madame de Pompadour, who had spoken about him to the king, for whom he had made a laboratory, in which the monarch — a martyr to boredom — tried to find a little pleasure — or distraction, at all events, by making dyes. The king had given him a suite of rooms at Chambord, and a hundred thousand francs for the construction of a laboratory, and according to St. Germain the dyes discovered by the king would have a materially beneficial influence on the quality of French fabrics.

This extraordinary man, intended by nature to be the king of impostors and quacks, would say in an easy, assured manner that he was three hundred years old, that he knew the secret of the Universal Medicine, that he possessed a mastery over nature, that he could melt diamonds, professing himself capable of forming, out of ten or twelve small diamonds, one large one of the finest water without any loss of weight. All this, he said, was a mere trifle to him. Notwithstanding his boastings, his barefaced lies, and his manifold eccentricities, I cannot say I thought him offensive. In spite of my knowledge of what he was and in spite of my own feelings, I thought him an astonishing man, as he was always astonishing me. I shall have something more to say of this character further on.

When Madame d'Urfé had introduced me to all her friends, I told her that I would dine with her whenever she wished, but that with the exception of her relations and St. Germain, whose wild talk amused me, I should prefer her to invite no company. St. Germain often dined with the best society in the capital, but he never ate anything, saying that he was kept alive by mysterious food known only to himself. One soon got used to his eccentricities, but not to his wonderful flow of words, which made him the soul of whatever company he was in.

By this time I had fathomed all the depths of Madame d'Urfé's character. She firmly believed me to be an adept of the first order, making use of another name for purposes of my own; and five or six weeks later she was confirmed in this wild idea on her asking me if I had deciphered the manuscript which pretended to explain the *magnum opus*.

"Yes," said I, "I have deciphered it, and consequently read it, and I now beg to return it you with my word of honour that I have not made a copy; in fact, I found nothing in it that I did not know before."

"Without the key, you mean, but of course you could never find out that."

"Shall I tell you the key?"

"Pray do so."

I gave her the word, which belonged to no language that I know of, and the marchioness was quite thunderstruck.

"This is too amazing," said she; "I thought myself the sole possessor of that mysterious word — for I had never written it down, laying it up in my memory — and I am sure I have never told anyone of it."

I might have informed her that the calculation which enabled me to decipher the manuscript furnished me also with the key, but the whim took me to tell her that a spirit had revealed it to me. This foolish tale completed my mastery over this truly learned and sensible woman on everything but her hobby. This false confidence gave me an immense ascendancy over Madame d'Urfé, and I often abused my power over her. Now that I am no longer the victim of those illusions which pursued me throughout my life, I blush at the remembrance of my conduct, and the penance I impose on myself is to tell the whole truth, and to extenuate nothing in these Memoirs.

The wildest notion in the good marchioness's brain was a firm belief in the possibility of communication between mortals and elementary spirits. She would have given all her goods to attain such communication, and she had several times been deceived by impostors who made her believe that she attained her aim.

"I did not think," said she, sadly, "that your spirit would have been able to force mine to reveal my secrets."

"There was no need to force your spirit, madam, as mine knows all things of his own power."

"Does he know the inmost secrets of my soul?"

"Certainly, and if I ask him he is forced to disclose all to me."

"Can you ask him when you like?"

"Oh, yes! provided I have paper and ink. I can even ask him questions through you by telling you his name."

"And will you tell it me?"

"I can do what I say; and, to convince you, his name is Paralis. Ask him a simple question in writing, as you would ask a common mortal. Ask him, for instance, how I deciphered your manuscript, and you shall see I will compel him to answer you."

Trembling with joy, Madame d'Urfé put her question, expressed it in numbers, then, following my method, in pyramid shape; and I made her extract the answer, which she wrote down in letters. At first she only obtained consonants, but by a second process which supplied the vowels she received a clear and sufficient answer. Her every feature expressed astonishment, for she had drawn from the pyramid the word which was the key to her manuscript. I left her, carrying with me her heart, her soul, her mind, and all the common sense which she had left.

De la Tour d'Auvergne having been obliged to rejoin his regiment, which was in garrison in Brittany, the marchioness and and I dined together almost every day and people looked upon me as her husband, and despite the improbability of the supposition, this was the only way in which they could account for the long hours we spent together. Madame d'Urfé thought that I was rich and looked upon my position at the lottery as a mere device for preserving my incognito.

I was the possessor in her estimation, not only of the philosopher's stone, but also of the power of speaking with the whole host of elementary spirits; from which premises she drew the very logical deduction that I could turn the world upside down if I liked, and be the blessing or the plague of France; and she thought my object in remaining incognito was to guard myself from arrest and imprisonment; which according to her would be the inevitable result of the minister's discovering my real character. These wild notions were the fruit of the nocturnal revelations of her genius, that is, of the dreams of her disordered spirit, which seemed to her realities. She did not seem to think that if I was endowed as she supposed, no one would have been able to arrest me, in the first place because I should have had foreknowledge of the attempt, and in the second place because my power would have been too strong for all bolts and bars. All this was clear enough, but strong passion and prejudice cannot reason.

One day, in the course of conversation, she said, with the ut-

most seriousness, that her genius had advised her that not even I had power to give her speech with the spirits, since she was a woman, and the genii only communicated with men, whose nature is more perfect. Nevertheless, by a process which was well known to me, I might make her soul pass into the body of a male child born of the mystic connection between a mortal and an immortal, or, in other words, between an ordinary man and a woman of a divine nature.

If I had thought it possible to lead back Madame d'Urfé to the right use of her senses I would have made the attempt, but I felt sure that her disease was without remedy, and the only course before me seemed to abet her in her ravings and to profit by them.

If I had spoken out like an honest man and told her that her theories were nonsensical, she would not have believed me; she would have thought me jealous of her knowledge, and I should have lost her favour without any gain to her or to myself. I thus let things take their course, and to speak the truth I was flattered to see myself treated as one of the most profound brothers of the Rosy Cross, as the most powerful of men by so distinguished a lady, who was in high repute for her learning, who entertained and was related to the first families of France, and had an income of eighty thousand francs, a splendid estate, and several magnificent houses in Paris. I was quite sure that she would refuse me nothing, and though I had no definite plan of profiting by her wealth I experienced a certain pleasure at the thought that I could do so if I would.

In spite of her immense fortune and her belief in her ability to make gold, Madame d'Urfé was miserly in her habits, for she never spent more than thirty thousand francs in a year, and she invested her savings in the exchange, and in this way had nearly doubled them. A brother used to buy her in government securities at their lowest rate and sell at their rise, and in this manner, being able to wait for their rise and fall, she had amassed a considerable sum.

She had told me more than once that she would give all she possessed to become a man, and that she knew I could do this for her if I would. One day, as she was speaking to me on this subject in a tone of persuasion almost irresistible, I told her that I must confess I had the power to do what she wanted, but that

I could not make up my mind to perform the operation upon her as I should have to kill her first. I thought this would effectually check her wish to go any further, but what was my surprise to hear her say:

"I know that, and what is more I know the death I shall have to die; but for all that I am ready."

"What, then, is that death, madam?"

"It is by the same poison which killed Paracelsus."

"Do you think that Paracelsus obtained the hypostasis?"

"No, but I know the reason of his not doing so."

"What is the reason?"

"It is that he was neither man nor woman, and a composite nature is incapable of the hypostasis, to obtain which one must be either the one or the other."

"Very true, but do you know how to make the poison, and that the thing is impossible without the aid of a salamander?"

"That may or may not be! I beseech you to inquire of the oracle whether there be anyone in Paris in possession of this potion."

It was easy to see that she thought herself in possession of it, so I had no hesitation in extracting her name from the oracular pyramid. I pretended to be astonished at the answer, but she said, boastfully:

"You see that all we want is a male child born of an immortal. This, I am advised, will be provided by you; and I do not think you will be found wanting out of a foolish pity for this poor old body of mine."

At these words I rose and went to the window, where I stayed for more than a quarter of an hour reflecting on her infatuation. When I returned to the table where she was seated she scanned my features attentively, and said, with much emotion, "Can it be done, my dear friend? I see that you have been weeping."

I did not try to undeceive her, and, taking my sword and hat, I took leave of her sadly. Her carriage, which was always at my disposal, was at the door, and I drove to the Boulevards, where I walked till the evening, wondering all the while at the extraordinary fantasies of the marchioness.

My brother had been made a member of the Academy, on the exhibition of a battle-piece which had taken all the critics

by storm. The picture was purchased by the Academy for five hundred louis.

He had fallen in love with Caroline, and would have married her but for a piece of infidelity on her part, which so enraged him that in a week after he married an Italian dancer. M. de Sanci, the ecclesiastical commissioner, gave the wedding party. He was fond of the girl, and out of gratitude to my brother for marrying her he got him numerous orders among his friends, which paved the way to the large fortune and high repute which my brother afterwards attained.

M. Corneman, the banker, who was at my brother's wedding, spoke to me at considerable length on the great dearth of money, and asked me to discuss the matter with the comptroller-general.

He told me that one might dispose of government securities to an association of brokers at Amsterdam, and take in exchange the securities of any other country whose credit was higher than that of France, and that these securities could easily be realised. I begged him to say no more about it, and promised to see what I could do.

The plan pleased me, and I turned it over all night; and the next day I went to the Palais Bourbon to discuss the question with M. de Bernis. He thought the whole idea an excellent one, and advised me to go to Holland with a letter from M. de Choiseul for M. d'Afri, the ambassador at The Hague. He thought that the first person I should consult was M. de Boulogne, with whom he warned me to appear as if I was sure of my ground.

"As you do not require money in advance," said he, "you will be able to get as many letters of recommendation as you like."

The same day I went to the comptroller-general, who approved of my plan, and told me that M. le Duc de Choiseul would be at the Invalides the next day, and that I should speak to him at once, and take a letter he would write for me.

"For my part," said he, "I will credit our ambassador with twenty millions, and if, contrary to my hopes, you do not succeed, the paper can be sent back to France."

I answered that there would be no question of the paper being returned, if they would be content with a fair price.

"The margin will be a small one; however, you will hear

about that from the ambassador, who will have full instructions."

I felt so flattered by this mission that I passed the night in thinking it over. The next day I went to the Invalides, and M. de Choiseul, so famous for taking decisive action, had no sooner read M. de Boulogne's letter and spoken a few words to me on the subject, than he got me to write a letter for M. d'Afri, which he signed, sealed, returned to me, and wished me a prosperous journey.

I immediately got a passport from M. de Berkenrode, and the same day took leave of Madame Baletti and all my friends except Madame d'Urfé, with whom I was to spend the whole of the next day. I gave my clerk at the lottery office full authority to sign all tickets.

The accounts of Casanova's experiences in Holland, where he negotiates financial transactions for the French government, sells shares for the Marquise d'Urfé, wins the boundless gratitude and admiration of a wealthy Dutch merchant by a marvellous prediction regarding a ship reported to be lost at sea, turns the head of his charming daughter Esther by initiating her into his cabalistic tricks, participates in secret peace negotiations between the representatives of England and France, ousts St. Germain, who has come on a similar mission and who is finally obliged to fly to England, ending with Casanova's return to France, where, thanks to his Dutch transactions, government securities are now booming on the market and ministers eager to embrace him, belong too obviously to the ben trovato *category of Casanovian exploits to merit serious attention.*

*The facts of the case, as they transpire from diplomatic and police archives, are that Casanova did, in fact, visit Holland on two occasions, having found it expedient to leave Paris for a while. On the second occasion he brought a letter of recommendation from Choiseul to the French minister at The Hague, M. d'Afri, who, however, having taken Casanova's measure on the occasion of a former meeting, refused to have anything to do with him and so informed his superior in Paris. As for the generous merchant, M. d'O ** of the Memoirs, his identity has been established as a certain Hope,*[1] *a*

[1] *The omission of the aspirate in Mr. Hope's name would be natural enough in conversation, as they presumably spoke in French. But if Casanova had known the gentleman so intimately, it is hardly likely that he would have misspelt his name, which he must often have seen written.*

well-known merchant of Amsterdam, who, unfortunately for Casanova, had no daughter.

As for the fortune he claims to have made in Holland on his second visit and which he squandered so liberally in Switzerland, there has unfortunately come to light documentary proof that Casanova's fortunes on reaching the territory of the Confederation were so low that he was obliged to pawn his wardrobe.

Amidst this amiable fantasy, where all is rose-coloured (in wilful contrast perhaps to the darkness of his actual experiences), there occurs a passage which brings us, and him, back to the material plane of facts — sombre facts, which seem to fill him with foreboding. Having gone to the theatre with his imaginary Esther, who had there introduced him to a namesake of his, another Casanova, and his daughter, he — Giacomo Casanova — is suddenly confronted with a vision of his past in the person of that Thérèse Imer, who had been the cause of his losing the favours of Senator Malipiero, and who on a later occasion in Venice had accorded him hers for a brief moment. This is how it happened:

After a fine symphony, a concerto for the violin, another for the hautbois, the Italian singer whose repute was so great and who was styled Madame Trenti made her appearance. What was my surprise when I recognised in her Thérèse Imer, wife of the dancer Pompeati, whose name the reader may remember. I had made her acquaintance eighteen years ago, when the old senator Malipiero had struck me because we were playing together. I had seen her again at Venice in 1753, and then our pastime had been of a more serious nature. She had gone to Bayreuth, where she had been the margrave's mistress. I had promised to go and see her, but C ** C ** and my fair nun M ** M ** had left me neither the time nor the wish to do so. Soon after I was put under The Leads, and then I had other things to think about. I was sufficiently self-controlled not to show my astonishment, and listened to an aria which she was singing, with her exquisite voice, beginning "*Eccoti giunta alfin, donna infelice,*" words which seemed made for the case.

The applause seemed as if it would never come to an end. Esther told me that it was not known who she was, but that she was said to be a woman with a history, and to be very badly off. "She goes from one town to another, singing at all the public concerts, and all she receives is what those present choose to give her on a plate which she takes round."

"Does she find that pay?"

"I should suspect not, as everyone has paid already at coming in. She cannot get more than thirty or forty florins. The day after to-morrow she will go to The Hague, then to Rotterdam, then back here again. She has been performing for six months, and she is always well received."

"Has she a lover?"

"She is said to have lovers in every town, but instead of enriching her they make her poorer. She always wears black, not only because she is a widow, but also on account of a great grief she is reported to have gone through. She will soon be coming round." I took out my purse, and counted out twelve ducats, which I wrapped in paper; my heart beating all the while in a ridiculous manner, for I had really nothing to be excited about.

When Thérèse was going along the seats in front of me, I glanced at her for an instant, and I saw that she looked surprised. I turned my head to speak to Esther, and when she was directly in front of me I put my little packet on the plate without looking at her, and she passed on. A little girl, four or five years old, followed her, and when she got to the end of the bench she came back to kiss my hand. I could not help recognising in her a facsimile of myself, but I concealed my emotion. The child stood still, and gazed at me fixedly, to my no small confusion. "Would you like some sweets, my dear?" said I, giving her my box, which I should have been glad to turn into gold. The little girl took it smilingly, made me a curtsy, and went on.

"Does it strike you, M. Casanova," said Esther, with a laugh, "that you and that little girl are as like each other as two peas?"

"Yes, indeed," added Mdlle. Casanova, "there *is* a striking likeness."

"These resemblances are often the work of chance."

"Just so," said Esther, with a wicked smile, "but you admit a likeness, don't you?"

"I confess I was struck with it, though of course I cannot judge so well as you."

After the concert M. d'O** arrived, and giving back his daughter to his care I betook myself to my lodging. I was just sitting down to a dish of oysters, before going to bed, when Thérèse made her appearance, holding her child by the hand. Although I had not expected her to visit me that evening, I was

nevertheless not much surprised to see her. I, of course, rose to greet her, when all at once she fell fainting on the sofa, though whether the fainting fit was real or assumed I cannot say. Thinking that she might be really ill I played my part properly, and brought her to herself by sprinkling her with cold water and putting my vinaigrette to her nose. As soon as she came to herself she began to gaze at me without saying a word. At last, tired of her silence, I asked her if she would take any supper; and on her replying in the affirmative, I rang the bell and ordered a good supper for three, which kept us at the table till seven o'clock in the morning, talking over our various fortunes and misfortunes. She was already acquainted with most of my recent adventures, but I knew nothing at all about hers, and she entertained me with a recital of them for five or six hours.

Sophie, the little girl, slept in my bed till day, and her mother, keeping the best of her tale to the last, told me that she was my daughter, and showed me her baptismal certificate. The birth of the child fell in with the period at which I had been intimate with Thérèse, and her perfect likeness to myself left no room for doubt. I therefore raised no objections, but told the mother that I was persuaded of my paternity, and that, being in a position to give the child a good education, I was ready to be a father to her.

"She is too precious a treasure in my sight; if we were separated I should die."

"You are wrong; for if I took charge of the little girl I should see that she was well provided for."

"I have a son of twelve to whom I cannot give a proper education; take charge of him instead of Sophie."

"Where is he?"

"He is boarding, or rather in pawn, at Rotterdam."

"What do you mean by in pawn?"

"I mean that he will not be returned to me until I pay the person who has got him all my debts."

"How much do you owe?"

"Eighty florins. You have already given me sixty-two, give me four ducats more; you can then take my son, and I shall be the happiest of mothers. I will send my son to you at The Hague next week, as I think you will be there."

"Yes, my dear Thérèse; and instead of four ducats, here are twenty."

"We shall see each other again at The Hague."

She was grateful to excess, but I only felt pity for her and a sort of friendly interest, and kept quite cool, despite the ardour of her embraces. Seeing that her trouble was of no avail, she sighed, shed some tears, and, taking her daughter, she bid me adieu, promising once more to send me her son.

Thérèse was two years older than I. She was still pretty, and even handsome, but her charms no longer retained their first beauty, and my passion for her having been a merely physical one, it was no wonder that she had no longer any attraction for me. Her adventures during the six years in which I had lost her would certainly interest my readers, and form a pleasing episode in my book, and I would tell the tale if it were a true one; but not being a romance writer, I am anxious that this work shall contain the truth and nothing but the truth. Convicted by her amorous and jealous margrave of infidelity, she had been sent about her business. She was separated from her husband, Pompeati, had followed a new lover to Brussels, and there had caught the fancy of Prince Charles de Lorraine, who had obtained her the direction of all the theatres in the Austrian Low Countries. She had then undertaken this vast responsibility, entailing heavy expenditure, till at last, after selling all her diamonds and lace, she had fled to Holland to avoid arrest. Her husband killed himself at Vienna in a paroxysm caused by internal pain — he had cut open his stomach with a razor, and died tearing at his entrails.

Before leaving The Hague, he goes to call on Thérèse, who is now in that city:

It was not long before I saw that I should do well to get back to Amsterdam, but I did not care to break my word to Thérèse, whom I had promised to meet at The Hague. I received a letter from her while I was at the play, and the servant who brought it told me he was waiting to conduct me to her. I sent my own servant home, and set out on my quest.

My guide made me climb to the fourth floor of a somewhat wretched house, and there I found this strange woman in a small room attended by her son and daughter. The table stood in the midst of the room, and was covered with a black cloth, and the two candles standing upon it made it look like some sort of sepulchral altar. The Hague was a Court town. I was richly dressed;

my elaborate attire made the saddest possible contrast with the gloom of my surroundings. Thérèse, dressed in black and seated between her children at that black table, reminded me of Medea. To see these two fair young creatures vowed to a lot of misery and disgrace was a sad and touching sight. I took the boy between my arms, and pressing him to my breast called him my son. His mother told him to look upon me as his father from henceforth. The lad recognised me; he remembered, much to my delight, seeing me in the May of 1753, in Venice, at Madame Manzoni's. He was slight but strong; his limbs were well proportioned, and his features intellectual. He was thirteen years old.

His sister sat perfectly still, apparently waiting for her turn to come. I took her on my knee, and as I embraced her, Nature herself seemed to tell me that she was my daughter. She took my kisses in silence, but it was easy to see that she thought herself preferred to her brother, and was charmed with the idea. All her clothing was a slight frock, and I was able to feel every limb and to kiss her pretty little body all over, delighted that so sweet a being owed her existence to me.

"Mamma, dear," said she, "is not this fine gentleman the same we saw at Amsterdam, and who was taken for my papa because I am like him? But that cannot be, for my papa is dead."

"So he is, sweetheart; but I may be your dear friend, mayn't I? Would you like to have me for a friend?"

"Yes, yes!" she cried, and throwing her arms about my neck gave me a thousand kisses, which I returned with delight.

After we had talked and laughed together we sat down at table, and the heroine Thérèse gave me a delicate supper accompanied by exquisite wines. "I have never given the margrave better fare," said she, "at those nice little suppers we used to take together."

Wishing to probe the disposition of her son, whom I had engaged to take away with me, I addressed several remarks to him, and soon discovered that he was of a false and deceitful nature, always on his guard, taking care of what he said, and consequently speaking only from his head and not from his heart. Every word was delivered with a quiet politeness which, no doubt, was intended to please me.

I told him that this sort of thing was all very well on occasion; but that there were times when a man's happiness depended on his freedom from constraint; then and only then was his amiability, if he had any, displayed. His mother, thinking to praise him, told me that reserve was his chief characteristic, that she had trained him to keep his counsel at all times and places, and that she was thus used to his being reserved with her as with everyone else.

"All I can say is," said I, "your system is an abominable one. You may have strangled in their infancy all the finer qualities with which nature has endowed your son, and have fairly set him on the way to become a monster instead of an angel. I don't see how the most devoted father can possibly have any affection for a son who keeps all his emotions under lock and key."

This outburst, which proceeded from the tenderness I would fain have felt for the boy, seemed to strike his mother dumb.

"Tell me, my dear, if you feel yourself capable of showing me that confidence which a father has a right to expect of a good son, and if you can promise to be perfectly open and unreserved towards me?"

"I promise that I will die rather than tell you a falsehood."

"That's just like him," said the mother, "I have succeeded in inspiring him with the utmost horror of untruthfulness."

"That's all very well, my dear madam, but you might have pursued a still better course, and one which would have been still more conducive to his happiness."

"What is that?"

"I will tell you. It was not necessary to make him detest a lie; you should have rather endeavoured to make him a lover of the truth by displaying it to him in all its native beauty. This is the only way to make him lovable, and love is the sole bestower of happiness in this world."

"But isn't it the same thing not to lie and to tell the truth?" said the boy, with a smile which charmed his mother and displeased me.

"Certainly not; there is a great difference — for to avoid lying you have only to hold your tongue; and do you think that comes to the same thing as speaking the truth? You must open your mind to me, my son, and tell me all your thoughts, even if

you blush in the recital. I will teach you how to blush, and soon you will have nothing to fear in laying open all your thoughts and deeds. When we know each other a little longer we shall see how we agree together. You must understand that I cannot look upon you as my son until I see cause to love you, and I cannot have you call me father till you treat me as the best friend you have. You may be quite sure that I shall find a way to discover your thoughts, however cleverly you try to hide them. If I find you deceitful and suspicious I shall certainly entertain no regard for you. As soon as I have finished my business at Amsterdam we will set out for Paris. I am leaving The Hague to-morrow, and on my return I hope to find you instructed by your mother in a system of morality more consonant with my views, and more likely to lead to your happiness."

On glancing at my little daughter, who had been listening to me with the greatest attention, I saw that her eyes were swimming with tears, which she could hardly retain.

"Why are you crying?" said the mother; "it is silly to cry." And with that the child ran to her mother and threw her arms round her neck.

"Would you like to come to Paris, too?" said I to her.

"Oh, yes! But mamma must come too, as she would die without me."

"What would you do if I told you to go?" said the mother.

"I would obey you, mamma, but how could I exist away from you?"

Thereupon my little daughter pretended to cry. I say pretended, as it was quite evident that the child did not mean what she said, and I am sure that her mother knew it as well as I.

It was really a melancholy thing to see the effects of a bad education on this young child, to whom nature had given intelligence and feeling. I took the mother on one side, and said that if she had intended to make actors of her children she had succeeded to admiration; but if she wished them to become useful members of society her system had failed lamentably, as they were in a fair way to become monsters of deceit. I continued making her the most pointed remonstrances until, in spite of her efforts to control herself, she burst into tears. However, she soon recovered her composure, and begged me to stay at The Hague a

day longer, but I told her it was out of the question, and left the room. I came in again a few minutes after, and Sophie came up to me and said, in a loving little voice:

"If you are really my friend, you will give me some proof of your friendship."

"And what proof do you want, my dear?"

"I want you to come and sup with me to-morrow."

"I can't, Sophie dear, for I have just said no to your mother, and she would be offended if I granted you what I had refused her."

"Oh, no! she wouldn't; it was she who told me to ask you just now."

I naturally began to laugh, but on her mother calling the girl a little fool, and the brother adding that he had never committed such an indiscretion, the poor child began to tremble all over, and looked abashed. I reassured her as best I could, not caring whether what I said displeased her mother or not, and I endeavoured to instil into her principles of a very different nature to those in which she had been reared, while she listened with an eagerness which proved that her heart was still ready to learn the right way. Little by little her face cleared, and I saw that I had made an impression, and though I could not flatter myself that any good I might do her would be lasting in its effects as long as she remained under the bad influence of her mother, I promised to come and sup with her the next evening, "but on the condition," I said, "that you give me a plain meal, and one bottle of Chambertin only, for you are not too well off."

"I know that, but mamma says that you pay for everything."

This reply made me go off into a roar of laughter; and in spite of her vexation the mother was obliged to follow my example. The poor woman, hardened by the life she led, took the child's simplicity for stupidity, but I saw in her a rough diamond which only wanted polishing.

Thérèse told me that the wine did not cost her anything, as the son of the Rotterdam burgomaster furnished her with it, and that he would sup with us the next day if I would allow him to be present. I answered smilingly that I should be delighted to see him, and I went away after giving my daughter, of whom I felt fond, a tender embrace. I would have done anything to be entrusted with her, but I saw it would be no good trying to get

possession of her, as the mother was evidently keeping her as a resource for her old age. This is a common way for adventuresses to look upon their daughters, and Thérèse was an adventuress in the widest acceptation of the term. I gave her twenty ducats to get clothes for my adopted son and Sophie, who, with spontaneous gratitude, and her eyes filled with tears, came and gave me a kiss. Joseph was going to kiss my hand, but I told him that it was degrading for one man to kiss another's hand, and that for the future he was to show his gratitude by embracing me as a son embraces his father.

Just as I was leaving, Thérèse took me to the closet where the two children were sleeping. I knew what she was thinking of; but all that was over long ago; I could think of no one but Esther.

The next day I found the burgomaster's son at my actress's house. He was a fine young fellow of twenty or twenty-one, but totally devoid of manner. He was Thérèse's lover, but he should have regulated his behaviour in my presence. Thérèse, seeing that he was posing as master of the field, and that his manners disgusted me, began to snub him, much to his displeasure, and after sneering at the poorness of the dishes, and praising the wine which he had supplied, he went out leaving us to finish our dessert by ourselves. I left myself at eleven, telling Thérèse that I should see her again before I went away. The Princesse de Galitzin, a Cantimir by birth, had asked me to dinner, and this made me lose another day.

Next day I heard from Madame d'Urfé, who enclosed a bill of exchange on Boaz for twelve thousand francs. She said that she had bought her shares for sixty thousand, that she did not wish to make anything of them, and that she hoped I would accept the overplus as my broker's fee. She worded her offer with too much courtesy for me to refuse it. The remainder of the letter was devoted to the wildest fancies. She said that her genius had revealed to her that I should bring back to Paris a boy born of the Mystical Marriage, and she hoped I would take pity on her. It was a strange coincidence, and seemed likely to attach the woman still more closely to her visionary theories. I laughed when I thought how she would be impressed by Thérèse's son, who was certainly not born of the Mystical Marriage.

In Amsterdam another phantom of his past — a very grim one this time — rises up before him. During that first period in Venice, the days of Marton and Nanette, while stopping in a country-house at Paséan, he played at love-making with a pretty child, the daughter of an honest couple living on the estate. Charmed and touched by her childish ways, he had, for once, refrained from taking advantage of her innocence — a fact he never ceased regretting, as he believed, perhaps sincerely, that he would have prevented the disaster which befell her after their parting had she really become his mistress. As it was, he felt himself to blame for having lighted a spark which, unquenched, flared up on the first occasion and caused the girl's ruin. It was a lesson to remember, not to kiss and run away, and henceforth he took care to extinguish himself any incipient conflagrations for which he was responsible. It was a case of noblesse oblige. *This is the story he tells:*

As I was going home I passed a tea-garden, and seeing a good many people going in and coming out I went in curious to know how these places were managed in Holland. Great heavens! I found myself the witness of an orgy, the scene a sort of cellar, a perfect cesspool of vice and debauchery. The discordant noise of the two or three instruments which formed the orchestra struck gloom to the soul and added to the horrors of the cavern. The air was dense with the fumes of bad tobacco, and vapours reeking of beer and garlic issued from every mouth. The company consisted of sailors, men of the lowest class, and a number of vile women. The sailors and the dregs of the people thought this den a garden of delight, and considered its pleasures compensation for the toils of the sea and the miseries of daily labour. There was not a single woman there whose aspect had anything redeeming about it. I was looking at the repulsive sight in silence, when a great hulking fellow, whose appearance suggested the blacksmith, and his voice the blackguard, came up to me and asked me in bad Italian if I would like to dance. I answered in the negative, but before leaving me he pointed out a Venetian woman who, he said, would oblige me if I gave her some drink.

Wishing to discover if she was anyone I knew I looked at her attentively, and seemed to recollect her features, although I could not decide who she could be. Feeling rather curious on the subject I sat down next to her, and asked if she came from Venice, and if she had left that country some time ago.

"Nearly eighteen years," she replied.

I ordered a bottle of wine, and asked if she would take any; she said yes, and added, if I liked, she would oblige me.

"I haven't time," I said; and I gave the poor wretch the change I received from the waiter. She was full of gratitude, and would have embraced me if I had allowed her.

"Do you like being at Amsterdam better than Venice?" I asked.

"Alas, no! for if I were in my own country I should not be following this dreadful trade."

"How old were you when you left Venice?"

"I was only fourteen and lived happily with my father and mother, who now may have died of grief."

"Who seduced you?"

"A rascally footman."

"In what part of Venice did you live?"

"I did not live in Venice, but at Friuli, not far off."

Friuli . . . eighteen years ago . . . a footman . . . I felt moved, and looking at the wretched woman more closely I soon recognized in her Lucie of Paséan. I cannot describe my sorrow, which I concealed as best I could, and tried hard to keep up my indifferent air. A life of debauchery rather than the flight of time had tarnished her beauty, and ruined the once exquisite outlines of her form. Lucie, that innocent and pretty maiden, grown ugly, vile, a common prostitute! It was a dreadful thought. She drank like a sailor, without looking at me, and without caring who I was. I took a few ducats from my purse, and slipped them into her hand, and without waiting for her to find out how much I had given her I left that horrible den.

I went to bed full of saddening thoughts. Not even under The Leads did I pass so wretched a day. I thought I must have risen under some unhappy star! I loathed myself. With regard to Lucie I felt the sting of remorse, but at the thought of M. d'O ** I hated myself. I considered that I should cause him a loss of three or four hundred thousand florins; and the thought was a bitter drop in the cup of my affection for Esther. I fancied she, as well as her father, would become my implacable foe; and love that is not returned is no love at all.

I spent a dreadful night. Lucie, Esther, her father, their hatred of me, and my hatred of myself, were the groundwork of my dreams. I saw Esther and her father, if not ruined, at all

events impoverished by my fault, and Lucie only thirty-two years old, and already deep in the abyss of vice, with an infinite prospect of misery and shame before her. The dawn was welcome indeed, for with its appearance a calm came to my spirit; it is the darkness which is terrible to a heart full of remorse.

As for the mythical Esther, it is time, he feels, to bid farewell to this airy vision, certain as he is of being able to invoke her again whenever it suits the purpose of his narrative:

The sad time of parting at last drew near, amid many regrets and tears from all of us. Esther gave me the two thousand pounds I had won so easily, and her father at my request gave me bills of exchange to the amount of a hundred thousand florins, with a note of two hundred thousand florins authorising me to draw upon him till the whole sum was exhausted. Just as I was going, Esther gave me fifty shirts and fifty handkerchiefs of the finest quality.

It was not my love for Manon Baletti, but a foolish vanity and a desire to cut a figure in the luxurious city of Paris, which made me leave Holland. But such was the disposition that Mother Nature had given me that fifteen months under The Leads had not been enough to cure this mental malady of mine. But when I reflect upon after events of my life I am not astonished that The Leads proved ineffectual, for the numberless vicissitudes which I have gone through since have not cured me — my disorder, indeed, being of the incurable kind. There is no such thing as destiny. We ourselves shape our lives, notwithstanding that saying of the Stoics, *Volentem ducit, nolentem trahit.*

After promising Esther to return before the end of the year, I set out with a clerk of the company who had brought the French securities, and I reached The Hague, where Boaz received me with a mingled air of wonder and admiration. He told me that I had worked a miracle; "but," he added, "to succeed thus you must have persuaded them that peace was on the point of being concluded."

"By no means," I answered; "so far from my persuading them, they are of the opposite opinion; but all the same I may tell you that peace is really imminent."

"If you like to give me that assurance in writing," said he, "I will make you a present of fifty thousand florins' worth of diamonds."

"Well," I answered, "the French ambassador is of the same opinion as myself; but I don't think the certainty is sufficiently great as yet for you to risk your diamonds upon it."

Next day I finished my business with the ambassador, and the clerk returned to Amsterdam.

I went to supper at Thérèse's, and found her children very well dressed. I told her to go on to Rotterdam the next day and wait for me there with her son, as I had no wish to give scandal at The Hague.

At Rotterdam Thérèse told me that she knew I had won half a million at Amsterdam, and that her fortune would be made if she could leave Holland for London. She had instructed Sophie to tell me that my good luck was the effect of the prayers she had addressed to Heaven on my behalf. I saw where the land lay, and I enjoyed a good laugh at the mother's craft, and the child's piety, and gave her a hundred ducats, telling her that she should have another hundred when she wrote to me from London. It was very evident that she thought the sum a very moderate one, but I would not give her any more. She waited for the moment when I was getting into my carriage to beg me to give her another hundred ducats, and I said, in a low tone, that she should have a thousand if she would give me her daughter. She thought it over for a minute, and then said that she could not part with her.

"I know very well why," I answered; and drawing a watch from my fob I gave it to Sophie, embraced her, and went on my way. I arrived at Paris on February 10th, and took sumptuous apartments near the Rue Montorgueil.

CHAPTER XI

The Fall and Rise of Giustina Wynne

HAVING left the lunar regions of Holland and Esther for the terra firma *of Paris, where the presence of M. de Sartines, King Louis's very efficient lieutenant of police, and his carefully kept records seem to exercise a restraining influence on the memorialist's imagination, let us follow him once more. The romantic story he is going to tell us is as near the truth as anything to be found in the Memoirs:*

During my journey from The Hague to Paris, short as it was, I had plenty of opportunities for seeing that the mental qualities of my adopted son were by no means equal to his physical ones.

As I have said, the chief point which his mother had impressed on him was reserve, which she had instilled into him out of regard for her own interests. My readers will understand what I mean, but the child, in following his mother's instructions, had gone beyond the bounds of moderation; he possessed reserve, it is true, but he was also full of dissimulation, suspicion, and hypocrisy — a fine trio of deceit in one who was still a boy. He not only concealed what he knew, but he pretended to know that which he did not. His idea of the one quality necessary to success in life was an impenetrable reserve, and to obtain this he had accustomed himself to silence the dictates of his heart, and to say no word that had not been carefully weighed. Giving other people wrong impressions passed with him for discretion, and his soul being incapable of a generous thought, he seemed likely to pass through life without knowing what friendship meant.

Knowing that Madame d'Urfé counted on the boy for the accomplishment of her absurd hypostasis, and that the more mystery I made of his birth the more extravagant would be her fancies about it, I told the lad that if I introduced him to a lady who questioned him by himself about his birth, he was to be perfectly open with her.

On my arrival at Paris my first visit was to my patron, whom I found in grand company, amongst whom I recognised the Venetian ambassador, who pretended not to know me.

"How long have you been in Paris?" said the minister, taking me by the hand.

"I have only just stepped out of my chaise."

"Then go to Versailles. You will find the Duc de Choiseul and the comptroller-general there. You have been wonderfully successful, go and get your meed of praise and come and see me afterwards. Tell the duke that Voltaire's appointment to be a gentleman-in-ordinary to the king is ready."

I was not going to start for Versailles at mid-day, but ministers in Paris are always talking in this style, as if Versailles were at the end of the street. Instead of going there, I went to see Madame d'Urfé.

She received me with the words that her genius had informed her that I should come to-day, and that she was delighted with the fulfilment of the prophecy.

"Corneman tells me that you have been doing wonders in Holland; but I see more in the matter than he does, as I am quite certain that you have taken over the twenty millions yourself. The funds have risen, and a hundred millions at least will be in circulation in the course of the next week. You must not be offended at my shabby present, for, of course, twelve thousand francs are nothing to you. You must look upon them as a little token of friendship.

"I am going to tell my servants to close all the doors, for I am too glad to see you not to want to have you all to myself."

A profound bow was the only reply I made to this flattering speech, and I saw her tremble with joy when I told her that I had brought a lad of twelve with me, whom I intended to place in the best school I could find that he might have a good education.

"I will send him myself to Viar, where my nephews are. What is his name? Where is he? I know well what this boy is, I long to see him. Why did you not alight from your journey at my house?"

Her questions and replies followed one another in rapid succession. I should have found it impossible to get in a word edgeways, even if I had wanted to, but I was very glad to let her expend her enthusiasm, and took good care not to interrupt her. On the first opportunity, I told her that I should have the pleasure of presenting the young gentleman to her the day after to-morrow, as on the morrow I had an engagement at Versailles.

"Does the dear lad speak French? While I am arranging for his going to school you must really let him come and live with me."

"We will discuss that question on the day after to-morrow, madam."

"Oh, how I wish the day after to-morrow was here!"

On leaving Madame d'Urfé I went to my lottery office and found everything in perfect order. I then went to the Italian play, and found Silvia and her daughter in the dressing-room.

"My dear friend," said she when she saw me, "I know that you have achieved a wonderful success in Holland, and I congratulate you."

I gave her an agreeable surprise by saying that I had been working for her daughter, and Marion herself blushed, and lowered her eyes in a very suggestive manner. "I will be with you at supper," I added, "and then we can talk at our ease." On leaving them I went to the amphitheatre, and what was my surprise to see in one of the first boxes Madame X ** C ** V **, with all her family. My readers will be glad to hear their history.

Madame X ** C ** V **, by birth a Greek, was the widow of an Englishman, by whom she had six children, four of whom were girls. On his death-bed he became a Catholic out of deference to the tears of his wife; but as his children could not inherit his forty thousand pounds invested in England without conforming to the Church of England, the family returned to London, where the widow complied with all the obligations of the law of England. What will people not do when their interests are at stake! though in a case like this there is no need to blame a person for yielding to prejudices which had the sanction of the law.

It was now the beginning of the year 1758, and five years before, when I was at Padua, I fell in love with the eldest daughter, but a few months after, when we were at Venice, Madame X ** C ** V ** thought good to exclude me from her family circle. The insult which the mother put upon me was softened by the daughter, who wrote me a charming letter, which I love to read even now. I may as well confess that my grief was the easier to bear as my time was taken up by my fair nun, M ** M **, and my dear C ** C **. Nevertheless, Mdlle. X ** C ** V **, though only fifteen, was of a perfect beauty, and was all the more charming in that to her physical advantages she joined those of a cultured mind.

Count Algarotti, the King of Prussia's chamberlain, gave her lessons, and several young nobles were among her suitors, her preference apparently being given to the heir of the family of Memmo de St. Marcuola. He died a year afterwards, while he was procurator.

My surprise at seeing this family at such a time and place may be imagined. Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** saw me directly, and pointed me out to her mother, who made a sign to me with her fan to come to their box.

She received me in the friendliest manner possible, telling me that we were not at Venice now, and that she hoped I would often come and see them at the Hôtel de Bretagne, in the Rue St. André des Arts. I told them that I did not wish to recall any events which might have happened at Venice, and her daughter having joined her entreaties to those of her mother, I promised to accept their invitation.

Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** struck me as prettier than ever; and my love, after sleeping for five years, awoke to fresh strength and vigour. They told me that they were going to pass six months at Paris before returning to Venice. In return I informed them that I intended making Paris my home, that I had just left Holland, that I was going to Versailles the next day, so that I could not pay my respects to them till the day after. I also begged them to accept my services, in a manner which let them know I was a person of some importance.

Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** said that she was aware that the results of my Dutch mission should render me dear to France, that she had always lived in hopes of seeing me once more, that my famous flight from The Leads had delighted them; "for," she added, "we have always been fond of you."

"I fancy your mother has kept her fondness for me very much to herself," I whispered to her.

"We won't say anything about that," said she in the same tone. "We learnt all the circumstances of your wonderful flight from a letter of sixteen pages you wrote to M. Memmo. We trembled with joy and shuddered with fear as we read it."

"How did you know I have been in Holland?"

"M. de la Popelinière told us about it yesterday."

M. de la Popelinière, the *fermier-général*, whom I had known seven years ago at Passi, came into the box just as his name was spoken. After complimenting me he said that if I could carry through the same operation for the India Company my fortune would be made.

"My advice to you is," he said, "to get yourself naturalised before it becomes generally known that you have made half a million of money."

"Half a million! I only wish I had!"

"You must have made that at the lowest calculation."

"On the contrary, I give you my assurance that if my claim

for brokerage is not allowed, the transaction will prove absolutely ruinous to me."

"Ah! no doubt you are right to take that tone. Meanwhile, everyone wants to make your acquaintance, for France is deeply indebted to you. You have caused the funds to recover in a very marked degree."

After the play was over I went to Silvia's, where I was received as if I had been the favourite child of the family; but on the other hand I gave them certain proofs that I wished to be regarded in that light. I was impressed with the idea that to their unshaken friendship I owed all my good luck, and I made the father, mother, the daughter, and the two sons, receive the presents I had got for them. The best was for the mother, who handed it on to her daughter. It was a pair of diamond earrings of great beauty, for which I had given fifteen thousand francs. Three days after, I sent her a box containing fine linen from Holland, and choice Mechlin and Alençon lace. Mario, who liked smoking, got a gold pipe; the father a choice gold and enamelled snuff-box, and I gave a repeater to the younger son, of whom I was very fond. I shall have occasion later on to speak of this lad, whose natural qualities were far superior to his position in life. But, you will ask, was I rich enough to make such presents? No, I was not, and I knew it perfectly well; but I gave these presents because I was afraid of not being able to do so if I waited.

I set out for Versailles at daybreak, and M. de Choiseul received me as before; his hair was being dressed, but for a moment he laid down his pen, which showed that I had become a person of greater importance in his eyes. After a slight but grateful compliment, he told me that if I thought myself capable of negotiating a loan of a hundred millions to bear interest at four per cent., he would do all in his power to help me. My answer was that I would think it over when I heard how much I was to have for what I had done already.

"But everybody says that you have made two hundred thousand florins by it."

"That would not be so bad; half a million of francs would be a fair foundation on which to build a fortune; but I can assure your excellence that there is not a word of truth in the report. I defy anyone to prove it; and till some substantial proof is offered, I think I can lay claim to brokerage."

"True, true. Go to the comptroller-general and state your views to him."

M. de Boulogne stopped the occupation on which he was engaged to give me a most friendly greeting, but when I said that he owed me a hundred thousand florins he smiled sardonically.

"I happen to know," he said, "that you have bills of exchange to the amount of a hundred thousand crowns payable to yourself."

"Certainly, but that money has no connection with my mission, as I can prove to you by referring to M. d'Afri. I have in my head an infallible project for increasing the revenue by twenty millions, in a manner which will cause no irritation."

"You don't say so! Communicate your plan, and I promise to get you a pension of a hundred thousand francs, and letters of nobility as well, if you like to become a Frenchman."

"I will think it over."

On leaving M. de Boulogne I went to the palace, where a ballet was going on before the Marquise de Pompadour.

She bowed to me as soon as she saw me, and on my approaching her she told me that I was an able financier, and that the "gentlemen below" could not appreciate my merits. She had not forgotten what I had said to her eight years before in the theatre at Fontainebleau. I replied that all good gifts were from above, whither, with her help, I hoped to attain.

On my return to Paris I went to the Hôtel Bourbon to inform my patron of the result of my journey. His advice to me was to continue to serve the government well, as its good fortune would come to be mine. On my telling him of my meeting with the X ** C ** V **'s, he said that M. de la Popelinière was going to marry the elder daughter.

I went to the Hôtel de Bretagne to pay my first call on Madame X ** C ** V **. The lady, though she was not overfond of me, received me with great politeness. I possibly cut a better figure in her eyes when rich, and at Paris, than when we were in Venice. We all know that diamonds have the strange power of fascination, and that they form an excellent substitute for virtue!

Madame X ** C ** V ** had with her an old Greek named Zandiri, brother to M. de Bragadin's major-domo, who was just dead. I uttered some expressions of sympathy, and the boor did not take the trouble to answer me, but I was avenged for his

foolish stiffness by the enthusiasm with which I was welcomed by everyone else. The eldest girl, her sisters, and the two sons almost overwhelmed me with friendliness. The eldest son was only fourteen and was a young fellow of charming manners, but evidently extremely independent, and sighed for the time when he would be able to devote himself to a career of profligacy, for which he was well fitted. Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** was both beautiful and charming in her manner, and had received an excellent education, of which, however, she made no parade. One could not stay in her presence without loving her, but she was no flirt, and I soon saw that she held out no vain hopes to those who had the misfortune not to please her. Without being rude she knew how to be cold, and it was all the worse for those whom her coldness did not show that their quest was useless.

The first hour I passed in her company chained me a captive to her triumphant car. I told her as much, and she replied that she was glad to have such a captive. She took the place in my heart where Esther had reigned a week before, but I freely confess that Esther yielded only because she was away. As to my attachment to Silvia's daughter, it was of such a nature as not to hinder me falling in love with any other woman who chanced to take my fancy. In the libertine's heart love cannot exist without substantial food, and women who have had some experience of the world are well aware of this fact. The youthful Baletti was a beginner, and so knew nothing of these things.

M. Farsetti, a Venetian of noble birth, a knight of Malta, a great student of the occult sciences, and a good Latin versifier, came in at one o'clock. Dinner was just ready and Madame X ** C ** V ** begged him to stay. She asked me also to dine with them, but wishing to dine with Madame d'Urfé I refused the invitation for the nonce.

M. Farsetti, who had known me very well in Venice, only noticed me by a side glance, and without showing any vexation I paid him back in the same coin. He smiled at Mdlle. X ** C ** V **'s praise of my courage. She noticed his expression, and as if to punish him for it went on to say that I had now the admiration of every Venetian, and that the French were anxious to have the honour of calling me a fellow-citizen. M. Farsetti asked me if my post at the lottery paid well. I replied, coolly, "Oh, yes, well enough for me to pay my clerks' salaries."

He understood the drift of my reply, and Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** smiled.

I found my supposed son with Madame d'Urfé, or rather in that amiable visionary's arms. She hastened to apologise for carrying him off, and I turned it off with a jest, having no other course to take.

"I made him sleep with me," she said, "but I shall be obliged to deprive myself of this privilege for the future, unless he promises to be more discreet."

I thought the idea a grand one, and the little fellow, in spite of his blushes, begged her to say how he had offended.

"We shall have the Comte de St. Germain," said Madame d'Urfé, "to dinner. I know he amuses you, and I like you to enjoy yourself at my house."

"For that, madam, your presence is all I need; nevertheless, I thank you for considering me."

In due course St. Germain arrived, and in his usual manner sat himself down, not to eat but to talk. With a face of imperturbable gravity he told the most incredible stories, which one had to pretend to believe, as he was always either the hero of the tale or an eye-witness of the event. All the same, I could not help bursting into laughter when he told us of something that happened as he was dining with the Fathers of the Council of Trent.

Madame d'Urfé wore on her neck a large magnet. She said that it would one day happen that this magnet would attract the lightning, and that she would consequently soar into the sun. I longed to tell her that when she got there she could be no higher up than on the earth, but I restrained myself; and the great charlatan hastened to say that there could be no doubt about it, and that he, and he only, could increase the force of the magnet a thousand times. I said, dryly, that I would wager twenty thousand crowns he would not so much as double its force, but Madame d'Urfé would not let us bet, and after dinner she told me in private that I should have lost, as St. Germain was a magician. Of course I agreed with her.

A few days later, the magician set out for Chambord, where the king had given him a suite of rooms and a hundred thousand francs, that he might be at liberty to work on the dyes which were to assure the superiority of French materials over those of any other country. St. Germain had got over the king by ar-

ranging a laboratory where he occasionally tried to amuse himself, though he knew little about chemistry, but the king was a victim of an almost universal weariness. To enjoy a harem recruited from amongst the most ravishing beauties, and often from the ranks of neophytes, with whom pleasure had its difficulties, one would have needed to be a god, and Louis XV. was only a man after all.

It was the famous marquise who had introduced the adept to the king in the hope of his distracting the monarch's weariness, by giving him a taste for chemistry. Indeed, Madame de Pompadour was under the impression that St. Germain had given her the water of perpetual youth, and therefore felt obliged to make the chemist a good return. This wondrous water, taken according to the charlatan's directions, could not indeed make old age retire and give way to youth, but according to the marquise it would preserve one *in statu quo* for several centuries.

As a matter of fact, the water, or the giver of it, had worked wonders, if not on her body, at least on her mind; she assured the king that she was not getting older. The king was as much deluded by this grand impostor as she was, for one day he showed the Duc des Deux-Ponts a diamond of the first water, weighing twelve carats, which he fancied he had made himself. "I melted down," said Louis XV., "small diamonds weighing twenty-four carats, and obtained this one large one weighing twelve." Thus it came to pass that the infatuated monarch gave the impostor the suite formerly occupied by Marshal Saxe. The Duc des Deux-Ponts told me this story with his own lips, one evening, when I was supping with him and a Swede, the Comte de Levenhoop, at Metz.

Before I left Madame d'Urfé, I told her that the lad might be he who should make her to be born again, but that she would spoil all if she did not wait for him to attain the age of puberty. After what she had said about his misbehaviour, the reader will guess what made me say this. She sent him to board with Viar, gave him masters on everything, and disguised him under the name of the Comte d'Aranda, although he was born at Bayreuth, and though his mother never had anything to do with a Spaniard of that name. It was three or four months before I went to see him, as I was afraid of being insulted on account of the name which the visionary Madame d'Urfé had given him.

One day Tiretta came to see me in a fine coach. He told me that his elderly mistress wanted to become his wife, but that he would not hear of it, though she offered to endow him with all her worldly goods. I told him that if he gave in he might pay his debts, return to Trevisa, and live pleasantly there; but his destiny would not allow him to take my advice.

I had resolved on taking a country-house, and fixed on one called Little Poland, which pleased me better than all the others I had seen. It was well furnished, and was a hundred paces distant from the Madeleine Gate. It was situated on slightly elevated ground near the royal park, behind the Duc de Grammont's garden, and its owner had given it the name of Pleasant Warsaw. It had two gardens, one of which was on a level with the first floor, three reception rooms, large stables, coach-houses, baths, a good cellar, and a splendid kitchen. The master was called The Butter King, and always wrote himself down so; the name had been given to him by Louis XV. on the monarch's stopping at the house and liking the butter. The Butter King let me his house for a hundred louis per annum, and he gave me an excellent cook called The Pearl, a true blue-ribbon of the order of cooks, and to her he gave charge of all his furniture and the plate I should want for a dinner of six persons, engaging to get me as much plate as I wanted at the hire of a sou an ounce. He also promised to let me have what wine I wanted, and said all he had was of the best, and, moreover, cheaper than I could get it at Paris, as he had no gate-money to pay on it.

Matters having been arranged on these terms, in the course of a week I got a good coachman, two fine carriages, five horses, a groom, and two footmen. Madame d'Urfé, who was my first guest, was delighted with my new abode, and as she imagined that I had done it all for her, I left her in that flattering opinion. I never could believe in the morality of snatching from poor mortal man the delusions which make them happy. I also let her retain the notion that young d'Aranda, the count of her own making, was a scion of the nobility, that he was born for a mysterious operation unknown to the rest of mankind, that I was only his caretaker (here I spoke the truth), and that he must die and yet not cease to live. All these whimsical ideas were the products of her brain, which was only occupied with the impossible, and I thought the best thing I could do was to agree with everything.

If I had tried to undeceive her, she would have accused me of want of trust in her, for she was convinced that all her knowledge was revealed to her by her genius, who spoke to her only by night. After she had dined with me I took her back to her house, full of happiness.

Camille sent me a lottery ticket, which she had invested in at my office, and which proved to be a winning one, I think, for a thousand crowns or thereabouts. She asked me to come and sup with her, and bring the money with me. I accepted her invitation, and found her surrounded by all the girls she knew and their lovers. After supper I was asked to go to the opera with them, but we had scarcely got there when I lost my party in the crowd. I had no mask on, and I soon found myself attacked by a black domino, whom I knew to be a woman, and as she told me a hundred truths about myself in a falsetto voice, I was interested, and determined on finding out who she was. At last I succeeded in persuading her to come with me into a box, and as soon as we were in and I had taken off her mask I was astonished to find she was Mdlle. X ** C ** V **.

"I have come to the ball," said she, "with one of my sisters, my elder brother, and M. Farsetti. I left them to go into a box and change my domino."

"They must feel very uneasy."

"I dare say they do, but I am not going to take pity on them till the end of the ball."

Finding myself alone with her, and certain of having her in my company for the rest of the night, I began to talk of our old love-making; and I took care to say that I was more in love with her than ever. She listened to me kindly, did not oppose my embraces, and by the few obstacles she placed in my way I judged that the happy moment was not far off. Nevertheless I felt that I must practise restraint that evening, and she let me see that she was obliged to me.

"I heard at Versailles, my dear mademoiselle, that you are going to marry M. de la Popelinière."

"So they say. My mother wishes me to do so, and the old financier fancies he has got me in his talons already; but he makes a mistake, as I will never consent to such a thing."

"He is old, but he is very rich."

"He is very rich and very generous, for he promises me a

dowry of a million if I become a widow without children; and if I had a son he would leave me all his property."

"You wouldn't have much difficulty in complying with the second alternative."

"I shall never have anything to do with his money, for I should never make my life miserable by a marriage with a man whom I do not love, while I do love another."

"Another! Who is the fortunate mortal to whom you have given your heart's treasure?"

"I do not know if my loved one is fortunate. My lover is a Venetian, and my mother knows of it; but she says that I should not be happy, that he is not worthy of me."

"Your mother is a strange woman, always crossing your affections."

"I cannot be angry with her. She may possibly be wrong, but she certainly loves me. She would rather that I should marry M. Farsetti, who would be very glad to have me, but I detest him."

"Has he made a declaration in terms?"

"He has, and all the marks of contempt I have given him seem to have no effect."

"He clings hard to hope; but the truth is you have fascinated him."

"Possibly, but I do not think him susceptible of any tender or generous feeling. He is a visionary; surly, jealous, and envious in his disposition. When he heard me expressing myself about you in the manner you deserve, he had the impudence to say to my mother before my face that she ought not to receive you."

"He deserves that I should give him a lesson in manners, but there are other ways in which he may be punished. I shall be delighted to serve you in any way I can."

"Alas! if I could only count on your friendship I should be happy."

The sigh with which she uttered these words sent fire through my veins, and I told her that I was her devoted slave; that I had fifty thousand crowns which were at her service, and that I would risk my life to win her favours. She replied that she was truly grateful to me, and as she threw her arms about my neck our lips met, but I saw that she was weeping, so I took care that

the fire which her kisses raised should be kept within bounds. She begged me to come and see her often, promising that as often as she could manage it we should be alone. I could ask no more, and after I had promised to come and dine with them on the morrow, we parted.

I passed an hour in walking behind her, enjoying my new position of intimate friend, and I then returned to my Little Poland. It was a short distance, for though I lived in the country I could get to any part of Paris in a quarter of an hour. I had a clever coachman, and capital horses not used to being spared. I got them from the royal stables, and as soon as I lost one I got another from the same place, having to pay two hundred francs. This happened to me several times, for, to my mind, going fast is one of the greatest pleasures which Paris offers.

Having accepted an invitation to dinner at the X ** C ** V **'s, I did not give myself much time for sleep, and I went out on foot with a cloak on. The snow was falling in large flakes, and when I got to madame's I was as white as a sheet from head to foot. She gave me a hearty welcome, laughing, and saying that her daughter had been telling her how she had puzzled me, and that she was delighted to see me come to dinner without ceremony. "But," added she, "it's Friday to-day, and you will have to fast, though, after all, the fish is very good. Dinner is not ready yet. You had better go and see my daughter, who is still a-bed."

As may be imagined, this invitation had not to be repeated, for a pretty woman looks better in bed than anywhere else. I found Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** sitting up in bed writing, but she stopped as soon as she saw me.

"How is this, sweet lie-a-bed, not up yet?"

"Yes, I am staying in bed partly because I feel lazy, and partly because I am freer here."

"I was afraid you were not quite well."

"Nor am I. However, we will say no more about that now. I am just going to take some soup, as those who foolishly establish the institution of fasting were not polite enough to ask my opinion on the subject. It does not agree with my health, and I don't like it, so I am not going to get up even to sit at table, though I shall thus deprive myself of your society."

I naturally told her that in her absence dinner would have no savour; and I spoke the truth.

As the presence of her sister did not disturb us, she took out of her pocket-book an epistle in verse which I had addressed to her when her mother had forbidden me the house. "This fatal letter," said she, "which you called *The Phœnix*, has shaped my life and may prove the cause of my death."

I had called it *The Phœnix* because, after bewailing my unhappy lot, I proceeded to predict how she would afterwards give her heart to a mortal whose qualities would make him deserve the name of Phœnix. A hundred lines were taken up in the description of these imaginary mental and moral characteristics, and certainly the being who should have them all would be right worthy of worship, for he would be rather a god than a man.

"Alas!" said Mdlle. X ** C ** V **, "I fell in love with this imaginary being, and feeling certain that such an one must exist I set myself to look for him. After six months I thought I had found him. I gave him my heart, I received his, we loved each other fondly. But for the last four months we have been separated, and during the whole time I have only had one letter from him. Yet I must not blame him, for I know he cannot help it. Such is my sorry fate: I can neither hear from him nor write to him."

This story was a confirmation of a theory of mine — namely, that the most important events in our lives proceed often from the most trifling causes. My epistle was nothing better than a number of lines of poetry more or less well written, and the being I had delineated was certainly not to be found, as he surpassed by far all human perfections, but a woman's heart travels so quickly and so far! Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** took the thing literally, and fell in love with a chimera of goodness, and then was fain to turn this into a real lover, not thinking of the vast difference between the ideal and the real. For all that, when she thought that she had found the original of my fancy portrait, she had no difficulty in endowing him with all the good qualities I had pictured. Of course Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** would have fallen in love if I had never written her a letter in verse, but she would have done so in a different manner, and probably with different results.

As soon as dinner was served we were summoned to do justice

to the choice fish which M. de la Popelinière had provided. Madame X ** C ** V **, a narrow-minded Greek, was naturally bigoted and superstitious. In the mind of a silly woman the idea of an alliance between the most opposite of beings, God and the Devil, seems quite natural. A priest had told her that, since she had converted her husband, her salvation was secure, for the Scriptures solemnly promised a *soul for a soul* to everyone who would lead a heretic or a heathen within the fold of the Church. And as Madame X ** C ** V ** had converted her husband, she felt no anxiety about the life of the world to come, as she had done all that was necessary. However, she ate fish on the days appointed; the reason being that she preferred it to flesh.

Dinner over, I returned to the lady's bedside, and there stayed till nearly nine o'clock, keeping my passions well under control all the time. I was foppish enough to think that her feelings were as lively as mine, and I did not care to show myself less self-restrained than she, though I knew then, as I know now, that this was a false line of argument. It is the same with opportunity as with fortune; one must seize them when they come to us, or else they go by, often to return no more.

Not seeing Farsetti at the table, I suspected there had been a quarrel, and I asked my sweetheart about it; but she told me I was mistaken in supposing they had quarrelled with him, and that the reason of his absence was that he would never leave his house on a Friday. The deluded man had had his horoscope drawn, and learning by it that he would be assassinated on a Friday he resolved always to shut himself up on that day. He was laughed at, but persisted in the same course till he died four years ago at the age of seventy. He thought to prove by the success of his precautions that a man's destiny depends on his discretion, and on the precautions he takes to avoid the misfortunes of which he has had warning. This line of argument holds good in all cases except when the misfortunes are predicted in a horoscope; for either the ills predicted are avoidable, in which case the horoscope is a useless piece of folly, or else the horoscope is the interpreter of destiny, in which case all the precautions in the world are of no avail. The Chevalier Farsetti was therefore a fool to imagine he had proved anything at all. He would have proved a good deal for many people if he had gone out on a Friday and had chanced to have been assassinated. Picus de la

Mirandola, who believed in astrology, says, I have no doubt truly, "*Astra influunt, non cogunt.*" But would it have been a real proof of the truth of astrology if Farsetti had been assassinated on a Friday? In my opinion, certainly not.

The Comte d'Eigreville had introduced me to his sister, the Comtesse du Rumain, who had been wanting to make my acquaintance ever since she had heard of my oracle. It was not long before I made friends with her husband and her two daughters, the elder of whom, nicknamed "Cotenfau," married M. de Polignac later on. Madame du Rumain was handsome rather than pretty, but she won the love of all by her kindness, her frank courtesy, and her eagerness to be of service to her friends. She had a magnificent figure, and would have awed the whole bench of judges if she had pleaded before them.

At her house I got to know Mesdames de Valbelle and de Rancerolles, the Princess de Chimai, and many others who were then in the best society of Paris. Although Madame du Rumain was not a proficient in the occult sciences, she had nevertheless consulted my oracle more frequently than Madame d'Urfé. She was of the utmost service to me in connection with an unhappy circumstance of which I shall speak presently.

The day after my long conversation with Mdlle. X ** C ** V **, my servant told me that there was a young man waiting who wanted to give me a letter with his own hands. I had him in, and on my asking him from whom the letter came, he replied that I should find all particulars in the letter, and that he had orders to wait for an answer. The epistle ran as follows:

"I am writing this at two o'clock in the morning. I am weary and in need of rest, but a burden on my soul deprives me of sleep. The secret I am about to tell you will no longer be so grievous when I have confided in you; I shall feel eased by placing it in your breast. I am with child, and my situation drives me to despair. I was obliged to write to you because I felt I could not say it. Give me a word in reply."

My feelings on reading the above may be guessed. I was petrified with astonishment and could only write, "I will be with you at eleven o'clock."

No one should say that he has passed through great misfortunes unless they have proved too great for his mind to bear. The confidence of Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** showed me that she was

in need of support. I congratulated myself on having the preference, and I vowed to do my best for her did it cost me my life. These were the thoughts of a lover, but for all that I could not conceal from myself the imprudence of the step she had taken. In such cases as these there is always the choice between speaking or writing, and the only feeling which can give the preference to writing is false shame, at bottom mere cowardice. If I had not been in love with her, I should have found it easier to have refused my aid in writing than if she had spoken to me, but I loved her to distraction.

"Yes," said I to myself, "she can count on me. Her mishap makes her all the dearer to me."

And below this there was another voice, a voice which whispered to me that if I succeeded in saving her my reward was sure. I am well aware that more than one grave moralist will fling stones at me for this avowal, but my answer is that such men cannot be in love as I was.

I was punctual to my appointment, and found the fair unfortunate at the door of the hotel.

"You are going out, are you? Where are you going?"

"I am going to mass at the Church of the Augustinians."

"Is this a saint's day?"

"No; but my mother makes me go every day."

"I will come with you."

"Yes, do, give me your arm; we will go into the cloisters and talk there."

Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** was accompanied by her maid, but she knew better than to be in the way, so we left her in the cloisters. As soon as we were alone she said to me:

"Have you read my letter?"

"Yes, of course; here it is, burn it yourself."

"No, keep it, and do so with your own hands."

"I see you trust in me, and I assure you I will not abuse your trust."

"I am sure you will not. I am four months with child; I can doubt it no longer, and the thought maddens me!"

"Comfort yourself, we will find some way to get over it."

"Yes; I leave all to you. You must procure an abortion."

"Never, dearest! that is a crime!"

"Alas! I know that well; but it is not a greater crime than

suicide, and there lies my choice: either to destroy the wretched witness of my shame, or to poison myself. For the latter alternative I have everything ready. You are my only friend, and it is for you to decide which it shall be. Speak to me! Are you angry that I have not gone to the Chevalier Farsetti before you?"

She saw my astonishment, and stopped short, and tried to wipe away the tears which escaped from her eyes. My heart bled for her.

"Laying the question of crime on one side," said I, "abortion is out of our power. If the means employed are not violent they are uncertain, and if they are violent they are dangerous to the mother. I will never risk becoming your executioner; but reckon on me, I will not forsake you. Your honour is as dear to me as your life. Be calm, and henceforth think that the peril is mine, not yours. Make up your mind that I shall find some way of escape, and that there will be no need to cut short that life, to preserve which I would gladly die. And allow me to say that when I read your note I felt glad, I could not help it, that at such an emergency you chose me before all others to be your helper. You will find that your trust was not given in vain, for no one loves you as well as I, and no one is so fain to help you. Later you shall begin to take the remedies I will get for you, but I warn you to be on your guard, for this is a serious matter — one of life and death. Possibly you have already told somebody about it — your maid or one of your sisters?"

"I have not told anybody but you, not even the author of my shame. I tremble when I think what my mother would do and say if she found out my situation. I am afraid she will draw her conclusions from my shape."

"So far there is nothing to be observed in that direction, the beauty of the outline still remains intact."

"But every day increases its size, and for that reason we must be quick in what we do. You must find a surgeon who does not know my name."

"I will not run the risk, it might lead to the discovery of the whole affair."

"What I should like you to do would be to take me to a midwife's. We can easily go without attracting any notice at the first ball at the opera."

"Yes, sweetheart, but that step is not necessary, and it might lead to our betrayal."

"No, no, in this great town there are midwives in every quarter, and we should never be known; we might keep our masks on all the time. Do me this kindness. A midwife's opinion is certainly worth having."

I could not refuse her request, but I made her agree to wait till the last ball, as the crowd was always greater, and we had a better chance of going out free from observation. I promised to be there in a black domino with a white mask in the Venetian fashion, and a rose painted beside the left eye. As soon as she saw me go out she was to follow me into a carriage. All this was carried out, but more if it anon.

I returned with her, and dined with them without taking any notice of Farsetti, who was also at the table, and had seen me come back from mass with her. We did not speak a word to one another; he did not like me and I despised him.

I must here relate a grievous mistake of which I was guilty, and which I have not yet forgiven myself.

I had promised to take Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** to a midwife, but I certainly ought to have taken her to a respectable woman's, for all we wanted to know was how a pregnant woman should regulate her diet and manner of living. But my evil genius took me by the Rue St. Louis, and there I saw the Montigni entering her house with a pretty girl whom I did not know, and so out of curiosity I went in after them. After amusing myself there, with Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** running in my head all the time, I asked the woman to give me the address of a midwife, as I wanted to consult one. She told me of a house in the Marais, where according to her dwelt the pearl of midwives, and began telling me some stories of her exploits, which all went to prove that the woman was an infamous character. I took her address, however, and as I should have to go there by night, I went the next day to see where the house was.

Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** was impatient to consult a midwife. On the night of the last ball she recognised me as we had agreed, and followed me out into the coach she saw me enter, and in less than a quarter of an hour we reached the house.

A woman of about fifty received us with great politeness, and asked what she could do.

Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** told her that she believed herself pregnant, and that she desired some means of concealing her misfortune. The wretch answered with a smile that she might as well tell her plainly that it would be easy to procure abortion. "I will do your business," said she, "for fifty louis, half to be paid in advance, and the rest when it's all over. I will trust in your honesty, and you will have to trust in mine. Give me the twenty-five louis down."

"If madame decides on taking your advice," said I, "I will bring you the money to-morrow."

I gave her two louis and left. Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** told me that she had no doubt of the infamy of this woman, as she was sure it was impossible to destroy the offspring without the risk of killing the mother also. "My only trust," said she, "is in you." I encouraged her in this idea, dissuading her from any criminal attempts, and assured her over and over again that she should not find her trust in me misplaced. All at once she complained of feeling cold, and asked if we had not time to warm ourselves in Little Poland, saying that she longed to see my pretty house. I was surprised and delighted with the idea. The night was too dark for her to see the exterior charms of my abode, she would have to satisfy herself with the inside, and leave the rest to her imagination. I thought my hour had come. I made the coach stop and we got down and walked some way, and then took another at the corner of the Rue de la Ferannerie. I promised the coachman six francs beyond his fare, and in a quarter of an hour he put us down at my door.

I rang with the touch of the master, the Pearl opened the door, and told me that there was nobody within, as I very well knew, but it was her habit to do so.

"Quick!" said I, "light us a fire, and bring some glasses and a bottle of champagne."

"Would you like an omelette?"

"Very well."

"Oh, I should like an omelette so much!" said Mdlle. X ** C ** V **. She was ravishing, and her laughing air seemed to promise me a moment of bliss. I sat down before the blazing fire and made her sit on my knee, covering her with kisses which she gave me back as lovingly. I had almost won what I wanted when she asked me in a sweet voice to stop. I obeyed, thinking

it would please her, feeling sure that she only delayed my victory to make it more complete, and that she would surrender after the champagne. I saw love, kindness, trust, and gratitude shining in her face, and I should have been sorry for her to think that I claimed her as a mere reward. No, I wanted her love, and nothing but her love.

We put on our masks and returned to the opera. On our way she dared to tell me that she should be obliged to decline my friendship if she had to pay for it so dearly.

"The emotions of love," I replied, "should yield to those of honour, and your honour as well as mine require us to continue friends. What I would have done for love I will now do for devoted friendship, and for the future I will die rather than make another attempt to gain those favours of which I thought you deemed me worthy."

We separated at the opera, and the vast crowd made me lose sight of her in an instant. Next day she told me that she had danced all night.

I returned to my house in a bad humour, trying in vain to justify a refusal which seemed humiliating and almost incredible. My good sense showed me, in spite of all sophisms, that I had been grievously insulted. I recollected the witty saying of Populia, who was never unfaithful to her husband except when she was with child —"*Non tollo vectorem,*" said she, "*nisi navi plena.*"

I felt certain that I was not loved, and the thought grieved me; and I considered that it would be unworthy of me to love one whom I could no longer hope to possess. I resolved to avenge myself by leaving her to her fate, feeling that I could not allow myself to be duped as I had been.

The night brought wisdom with it, and when I awoke in the morning my mind was calm and I was still in love. I determined to act generously by the unfortunate girl. Without my aid she would be ruined; my course, then, would be to continue my services and to show myself indifferent to her favours. The part was no easy one, but I played it right well, and at last my reward came of itself.

What this "reward" was, it is easy to guess. It was obtained by means of a magic specific, recommended by Madame d'Urfé, who had been consulted in the matter. The story of the "aroph" (aroma

philosophorum) *of Paracelsus and the nightly* modus operandi *in a secret garret is neither convincing nor very entertaining, but it is in keeping with Casanova's erotic complex, which included a predilection for magical obscenities. Meanwhile the situation for the lady was getting serious and something had to be done to save her reputation. Fortunately Madame du Rumain, another* grande dame, *whose favour he had gained, came to the rescue:*

Three or four days afterwards I found her thoughtful but quiet. She told me that she had lost all hope of getting rid of her burden before the proper time. All the while, however, her mother persecuted her, and she would have to choose in a few days between making a declaration as to her state and signing the marriage contract. She would accept neither of these alternatives, and had decided on escaping from her home, and asked me to help her in doing so.

I had determined to help her, but I desired to save my reputation, for it might have been troublesome if it had been absolutely known that I had carried her off or furnished her with the means to escape. And as for any other alternative, neither of us had any idea of matrimony.

I left her and went to the Tuileries, where a sacred concert was being given. The piece was a motet composed by Moudonville, the words by the Abbé de Voisenon, whom I had furnished with the idea, *The Israelites on Mount Horeb.*

As I was getting out of my carriage, I saw Madame du Rumain descending alone from hers. I ran up to her, and received a hearty welcome. "I am delighted," said she, "to find you here, it is quite a piece of luck. I am going to hear this novel composition, and have two reserved seats. Will you do me the honour of accepting one?"

Although I had my ticket in my pocket I could not refuse so honourable an offer, so, giving her my arm, we walked up to two of the best places in the house.

At Paris no talking is allowed during the performance of sacred music, especially when the piece is heard for the first time; so Madame du Rumain could draw no conclusions from my silence throughout the performance, but she guessed that something was the matter from the troubled and absent expression of my face, which was by no means natural to me.

"M. Casanova," said she, "be good enough to give me your

company for an hour. I want to ask you two or three questions which can only be solved by your cabala. I hope you will oblige me, as I am very anxious to know the answers, but we must be quick as I have an engagement to sup in Paris."

It may be imagined that I did not wait to be asked twice, and as soon as we got to her house I went to work on the questions, and solved them all in less than half an hour.

When I had finished, "M. Casanova," said she, in the kindest manner possible, "what is the matter with you? You are not in your usual state of equanimity, and if I am not mistaken you are dreading some dire event. Or perhaps you are on the eve of taking some important resolution? I am not inquisitive, but if I can be of any service to you at Court, make use of me, and be sure that I will do my best. If necessary, I will go to Versailles to-morrow morning. I know all the ministers. Confide in me your troubles, if I cannot lighten them I can at least share them, and be sure I will keep your counsel."

Her words seemed to me a voice from heaven, a warning from my good genius to open my heart to this lady, who had almost read my thoughts, and had so plainly expressed her interest in my welfare. After gazing at her for some seconds without speaking, but with a manner that showed her how grateful I was: "Yes, madam," I said, "I am indeed critically situated, maybe on the verge of ruin, but your kindness has calmed my soul and made me once more acquainted with hope. You shall hear how I am placed. I am going to trust you with a secret of the most delicate description, but I can rely on your being as discreet as you are good. And if after hearing my story you deign to give me your advice, I promise to follow it and never to divulge its author."

After this beginning, which gained her close attention, I told her all the circumstances of the case, neither concealing the young lady's name nor any of the circumstances which made it my duty to watch over her welfare. All the same I said nothing about the aroph or the share I had taken in its exhibition.

After this weighty communication I stopped, and Madame du Rumain remained silent, as if lost in thought, for nearly a quarter of an hour. At last she rose, saying:

"I am expected at Madame de la Marque's, and I must go, as I am to meet the Bishop of Montrouge, to whom I want to

speak, but I hope I shall eventually be able to help you. Come here the day after to-morrow, you will find me alone; above all, do nothing before you see me. Farewell."

I left her full of hope, and resolved to follow her advice and hers only in the troublesome affair in which I was involved.

The Bishop of Montrouge whom she was going to address on an important matter, the nature of which was well known to me, was the Abbé de Voisenon, who was thus named because he often went there. Montrouge is an estate near Paris, belonging to the Duc de la Valière.

I saw Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** the following day, and contented myself with telling her that in a couple of days I hoped to give her some good news. I was pleased with her manner, which was full of resignation, and trust in my endeavours.

The day after, I went to Madame du Rumain's punctually at eight. The porter told me that I should find the doctor with my lady, but I went upstairs all the same, and as soon as the doctor saw me he took his leave. His name was Herrenschwand, and all the ladies in Paris ran after him. Poor Poinsinet put him in a little one-act play called *Le Cercle*, which, though of very ordinary merit, was a great success.

"My dear sir," said Madame du Rumain, as soon as we were alone, "I have succeeded in my endeavours on your behalf, and it is now for you to keep secret my share in the matter. After I had pondered over the case of conscience you submitted to me, I went to the convent of C **, where the abbess is a friend of mine, and I entrusted her with the secret, relying on her discretion. We agreed that she should receive the young lady in her convent, and give her a good lay sister to nurse her through her confinement. Now you will not deny," said she, with a smile, "that the cloisters are of some use. Your young friend must go by herself to the convent with a letter for the abbess, which I will give her, and which she must deliver to the porter. She will then be admitted and lodged in a suitable chamber. She will receive no visitors nor any letters that have not passed through my hands. The abbess will bring her answers to me, and I will pass them on to you. You must see that her only correspondent must be yourself, and you must receive news of her welfare only through me. On your hand, in writing to her you must leave the address to be filled in by me. I had to tell the abbess the lady's name, but not yours, as she did not require it.

"Tell your young friend all about our plans, and when she is ready come and tell me, and I will give you the letter to the abbess. Tell her to bring nothing but what is strictly necessary, above all no diamonds or trinkets of any value. You may assure her that the abbess will be friendly, will come and see her every now and then, will give her proper books — in a word, that she will be well looked after. Warn her not to confide in the lay sister who will attend on her. I have no doubt she is an excellent woman, but she is a nun, and the secret might leak out. After she is safely delivered, she must go to confession and perform her Easter duties, and the abbess will give her a certificate of good behaviour; and she can then return to her mother, who will be too happy to see her to say anything more about the marriage, which, of course, she ought to give as her reason of her leaving home."

After many expressions of my gratitude to her, and of my admiration of her plan, I begged her to give me the letter on the spot, as there was no time to be lost. She was good enough to go at once to her desk, where she wrote as follows:

"My dear abbess, — The young lady who will give you this letter is the same of whom we have spoken. She wishes to spend three or four months under your protection, to recover her peace of mind, to perform her devotions, and to make sure that when she returns to her mother nothing more will be said about the marriage, which is partly the cause of her temporary separation from her family."

After reading it to me, she put it into my hands unsealed, that Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** might be able to read it. The abbess in question was a princess, and her convent was consequently a place above all suspicion. As Madame du Rumain gave me the letter, I felt such an impulse of gratitude that I fell on my knees before her. This generous woman was useful to me on another occasion, of which I shall speak later on.

After leaving Madame du Rumain I went straight to the Hôtel de Bretagne, where I saw Mdlle. X ** C ** V **, who had only time to tell me that she was engaged for the rest of the day, but that she would come to the garret at eleven o'clock that night, and that then we could talk matters over. I was overjoyed at this arrangement, as I foresaw that after this would come the awakening from a happy dream, and that I should be alone with her no more.

Before leaving the hotel I gave the word to Madelaine, who in turn got the scullion to have everything in readiness.

I kept the appointment, and had not long to wait for my mistress. After making her read the letter written by Madame du Rumain (whose name I withheld from her without her taking offence thereat) I put out the candle, and without troubling about the aroph, we set ourselves to the pleasant task of proving that we truly loved each other.

In the morning, before we separated, I gave her all the instructions I had received from Madame du Rumain; and we agreed that she should leave the house at eight o'clock with such things as she absolutely required, that she should take a coach to the Place Maubert, then send it away, and take another to the Place Antoine, and again, farther on, a third coach, in which she was to go to the convent named. I begged her not to forget to burn all the letters she had received from me, and to write to me from the convent as often as she could, to seal her letters, but to leave the address blank. She promised to carry out my instructions, and I then made her accept a packet of two hundred louis, of which she might chance to be in need. She wept, more for my situation than her own, but I consoled her by saying that I had plenty of money and powerful patrons.

"I will set out," said she, "the day after to-morrow, at the hour agreed on." And thereupon, I having promised to come to the house the day after her departure, as if I knew nothing about it, and to let her know what passed, we embraced each other tenderly, and I left her.

I was troubled in thinking about her fate. She had wit and courage, but when experience is wanting, wit often leads men to commit acts of great folly.

The day after the morrow I took a coach, and posted myself in a corner of the street by which she had to pass. I saw her come, get out of the coach, pay the coachman, go down a narrow street, and a few minutes after reappear again, veiled and hooded, carrying a small parcel in her hand. She then took another conveyance which went off in the direction we had agreed upon.

* * *

Mdlle. X** C** V** had now been in the convent for a month, and her affair had ceased to be a common topic of

conversation. I thought I should hear no more of it, but I was mistaken. I continued, however, to amuse myself, and my pleasure in spending freely quite prevented me from thinking about the future. The Abbé de Bernis, whom I went to see regularly once a week, told me one day that the comptroller-general often inquired how I was getting on. "You are wrong," said the abbé, "to neglect him." He advised me to say no more about my claims, but to communicate to him the means I had spoken of for increasing the revenues of the state. I laid too great store by the advice of the man who had made my fortune not to follow it. I went to the comptroller, and trusting in his probity, I explained my scheme to him. This was to pass a law by which every estate, except that left by father to son, should furnish the treasury with one year's income; every deed of gift formally drawn up being subject to the same provision. It seemed to me that the law could not give offence to anyone; the heir had only to imagine that he had inherited a year later than was actually the case. The minister was of the same opinion as myself, told me there would not be the slightest difficulty involved, and assured me that my fortune was made. In a week afterwards his place was taken by M. de Silhouette, and when I called on the new minister he told me coldly that when my scheme became law he would tell me. It became law two years afterwards, and when, as the originator of the scheme, I attempted to get my just reward, they laughed in my face.

Shortly after, the Pope died, and he was succeeded by the Venetian Rezzonico, who created my patron, the Abbé de Bernis, a cardinal. However, he had to go into exile by order of the king two days after his gracious majesty had presented him with the red cap: so good a thing it is to be the friend of kings!

The disgrace of my delightful abbé left me without a patron, but I had plenty of money, and so was enabled to bear this misfortune with resignation.

For having undone all the work of Cardinal Richelieu, for having changed the old enmity between France and Austria into friendship, for delivering Italy from the horrors of war which befell her whenever these countries had a bone to pick, although he was the first cardinal made by a pope who had had plenty of opportunities for discovering his character, merely because, on being asked, he had given it as his opinion that the Prince de

Soubise was not a fit person to command the French armies, this great ecclesiastic was driven into exile. The moment the Pompadour heard of this opinion of his, she decreed his banishment — a sentence which was unpopular with all classes of society; but they consoled themselves with epigrams, and the new cardinal was soon forgotten. Such is the character of the French people; it cares neither for its own misfortunes nor for those of others, if only it can extract laughter from them.

In my time epigrammatists and poetasters who assailed ministers or even the king's mistresses were sent to the Bastille, but the wits still persisted in being amusing, and there were some who considered a jest incomplete that was not followed by a prosecution. A man whose name I have forgotten — a great lover of notoriety — appropriated the following verses by the younger Crébillon, and went to the Bastille rather than disown them:

"All the world's turned upside down!
Jupiter has donned the gown — the King.
Venus mounts the council stair — the Pompadour.
Plutus trifles with the fair — M. de Boulogne.
Mercury in mail is dressed — Maréchal de Richelieu.
Mighty Mars has turned a priest — the Duc de Clermont, abbé of St. Germain-des-prés."

Crébillon, who was not the sort of man to conceal his writings, told the Duc de Choiseul that he had written some verses exactly like these, but that it was possible the prisoner had been inspired with precisely the same ideas. This jest was applauded, and the author of *The Sofa* was let alone.

Cardinal de Bernis passed ten years in exile, *procul negotiis*, but he was not happy, as he told me himself when I knew him in Rome fifteen years afterwards. It is said that it is better to be a minister than a king — an opinion which seems ridiculous when it is analysed. The question is, which is the better, independence or its contrary. The axiom may possibly be verified in a despotic government under an absurd, weak, or careless king who serves as a mere mask for his master the minister; but in all other cases it is an absurdity.

Cardinal de Bernis was never recalled; there is no instance of Louis XV. having ever recalled a minister whom he had

disgraced; but on the death of Rezzonico he had to go to Rome to be present at the conclave, and there he remained as French ambassador.

About this time Madame d'Urfé conceived a wish to make the acquaintance of J. J. Rousseau, and we went to call upon him at Montmorenci, on the pretext of giving him music to copy — an occupation in which he was very skilled. He was paid twice the sum given to any other copyist, but he guaranteed that the work should be faultlessly done. At that period of his life copying music was the great writer's sole means of subsistence.

We found him to be a man of simple and modest demeanour, who talked well, but who was not otherwise distinguished either intellectually or physically. We did not think him what would be called a good-natured man, and as he was far from having the manners of good society Madame d'Urfé did not hesitate to pronounce him vulgar. We saw the woman with whom he lived, and of whom we had heard, but she scarcely looked at us. On our way home we amused ourselves by talking about Rousseau's eccentric habits.

I will here note down the visit of the Prince of Conti (father of the gentleman who is now known as the Conte de la Marche) to Rousseau.

The prince — a good-natured man — went by himself to Montmorenci, on purpose to spend a day in conversation with the philosopher, who was even then famous. He found him in the park, accosted him, and said that he had come to dine with him and to talk without restraint.

"Your highness will fare but badly," said Rousseau; "however, I will tell them to lay another knife and fork."

The philosopher gave his instructions, and came out and rejoined the prince, with whom he walked up and down for two or three hours. When it was dinner-time he took the prince into his dining-room, where the table was laid for three.

"Who is going to dine with us?" said the prince. "I thought we were to be alone."

"The third party," said Rousseau, "is my other self — a being who is neither my wife, nor my mistress, nor my servant-maid, nor my mother, nor my daughter, but yet personates all these characters at once."

"I dare say, my dear fellow, I dare say; but as I came to dine

with you alone, I will not dine with your other self, but will leave you with all the rest of you to keep you company."

So saying the prince bade him farewell and went out. Rousseau did not try to keep him.

Some time after, my thoughts were occupied with a business speculation which all my calculations assured me would be extremely profitable. The plan was to produce on silks, by means of printing, the exquisite designs which are produced at Lyons by the tedious process of weaving, and thus to give customers excellent value at much lower prices. I had the requisite knowledge of chemistry, and enough capital to make the thing a success. I obtained the assistance of a man with the necessary technical skill and knowledge, intending to make him my manager.

I told my plan to the Prince de Conti, who encouraged me to persevere, promising me his patronage, and all the privileges I could wish for. That decided me to begin.

I rented a very large house near the Temple for a thousand crowns per annum. The house contained a spacious hall, in which I meant to put my workmen; another hall which was to be the shop; numerous rooms for my workpeople to live in; and a nice room for myself in case I cared to live on the premises.

I made the scheme into a company with thirty shares, of which I gave five to my designer, keeping the remaining twenty-five to distribute to those who were inclined to join the company. I gave one to a doctor who, on giving surety, became the storekeeper, and came to live in the house with his whole family; and I engaged four servants, a waiting-maid, and a porter. I had to give another share to an accountant, who furnished me with two clerks, who also took up their abode in the house. The carpenters, blacksmiths, and painters worked hard from morning to night, and in less than three weeks the place was ready. I told the manager to engage twenty girls to paint, who were to be paid every Saturday. I stocked the warehouse with three hundred pieces of sarcenet and camlet of different shades and colours to receive the designs, and I paid for everything in ready money.

I had made an approximate calculation with my manager that I should have to spend three hundred thousand francs, and that would not break me. If the worst happened I could fall back on my shares, which produced a good income, but I hoped

I should not be compelled to do this, as I wanted to have an income of two hundred thousand francs a year.

All the while I did not conceal from myself that the speculation might be my ruin, if custom did not come in, but on looking at my beautiful materials these fears were dispelled, especially as I heard everybody saying that I sold them much too cheap.

To set up the business I spent in the course of a month about sixty thousand francs, and my weekly expenses amounted to twelve hundred francs.

As for Madame d'Urfé she laughed every time she saw me, for she was quite certain that this business was only meant to put the curious off the scent and to preserve my incognito; so persuaded was she of my omnipotence.

The sight of twenty girls, all more or less pretty, the eldest of whom was not twenty-five, far from making me tremble as it ought, delighted me. I fancied myself in the midst of a seraglio, I amused myself by watching their meek and modest looks as they did their work under the direction of the foreman. The best paid did not get more than twenty-four sous a day, and all of them had excellent reputations, for they had been selected at her own request by the manager's wife, a devout woman of ripe age, whom I hoped to find obliging if the fancy seized me to test her choice. Manon Baletti did not share my satisfaction in them. She trembled to see me the owner of a harem, well knowing that sooner or later the barque of my virtue would run on the rocks. She scolded me well about these girls, though I assured her that none of them slept in the house.

This business increased my own ideas of my importance; partly from the thought that I was on the high road to fortune, and partly because I furnished so many people with the means of subsistence. Alas! I was too fortunate; and my evil genius soon crossed my career.

It was now three months since Mdlle. X** C** V** had gone into the convent, and the time of her delivery drew near. We wrote to each other twice a week, and I considered the matter happily settled; M. de la Popelinière had married, and when Mdlle. X** C** V** returned to her mother there would be nothing more to be said. But just at this period, when my happiness seemed assured, the hidden fire leapt forth and threatened to consume me; how, the reader will see.

One day after leaving Madame d'Urfé's I went to walk in the Tuileries. I had taken a couple of turns in the chief walk when I saw that an old woman, accompanied by a man dressed in black, was looking at me closely and communicating her observations to her companion. There was nothing very astonishing in this in a public place, and I continued my walk, and on turning again saw the same couple still watching me. In my turn I looked at them, and remembered seeing the man in a gaming-house, where he was known by the name of Castel-Bajac. On scrutinising the features of the hag, I at last succeeded in recollecting who she was; she was the woman to whom I had taken Mdlle. X ** C ** V **. I felt certain that she had recognised me, but not troubling myself about the matter I left the gardens to walk elsewhere. The day after next, just as I was going to get into my carriage, a man of evil aspect gave me a paper and asked me to read it. I opened it, but finding it covered with an illegible scrawl I gave it him back, telling him to read it himself. He did so, and I found myself summoned to appear before the commissary of police to answer to the plea which the midwife (whose name I forget) brought against me.

Although I could guess what the charge would be, and was certain that the midwife could furnish no proofs of her accusation, I went to an attorney I knew and told him to appear for me. I instructed him that I did not know any midwife in Paris whatsoever. The attorney waited on the commissary, and on the day after brought me a copy of the pleas.

The midwife said that I came to her one night, accompanied by a young lady about five months with child, and that, holding a pistol in one hand and a packet of fifty louis in the other, I made her promise to procure abortion. We both of us (so she said) had masks on, thus showing that we had been at the opera ball. Fear, she said, had prevented her from flatly refusing to grant my request; but she had enough presence of mind to say that she would have all in order by the next night; whereupon we left, promising to return. In the belief that we would not fail to keep the appointment, she went in to M. Castel-Bajac to ask him to hide in the next room that she might be protected from my fury, and that he might be a witness of what I said, but she had not seen me again. She added that she would have given information the day after the event if she had known who

I was, but since M. Castel-Bajac had told her my name on her recognising me in the Tuileries she had thought it her bounden duty to deliver me to the law that she might be compensated for the violence I had used to her. And this document was signed by the said Castel-Bajac as a witness.

"This is an evident case of libel," said my attorney, "at least, if she can't prove the truth of her allegations. My advice to you is to take the matter before the criminal lieutenant, who will be able to give you the satisfaction you require."

I authorised him to do what he thought advisable, and three or four days after, he told me that the lieutenant wished to speak to me in private, and would expect me the same day at three o'clock in the afternoon.

As will be expected, I was punctual to the appointment. I found the magistrate to be a polite and good-hearted gentleman. He was, in fact, the well-known M. de Sartine, who was the chief of police two years later. His office of criminal lieutenant was saleable, and M. de Sartine sold it when he was appointed head of the police.

As soon as I had made my bow, he asked me to sit down by him, and addressed me as follows:

"I have asked you to call upon me in the interests of both of us, as in your position our interests are inseparable. If you are innocent of the charge which has been brought against you, you are quite right to appeal to me; but before proceedings begin, you should tell me the whole truth. I am ready to forget my position as judge, and to give you my help, but you must see yourself that to prove the other side guilty of slander you must prove yourself innocent. What I want from you is an informal and strictly confidential declaration, for the case against you is a serious one, and of such a kind as to require all your efforts to wipe off this blot upon your honour. Your enemies will not respect your delicacy of feeling. They will press you so hard that you will either be obliged to submit to a shameful sentence, or to wound your feelings of honour in proving your innocence. You see I am confiding in you, for in certain cases honour seems so precious a thing to me that I am ready to defend it with all the power of the law. Pay me back, then, in the same coin, trust in me entirely, tell me the whole story without any reserves, and you may rely upon my good offices. All will be well

if you are innocent, for I shall not be the less a judge because I am your friend; but if you are guilty I am sorry for you, for I warn you that I shall be just."

After doing my best to express my gratitude to him, I said that my position did not oblige me to make any reservations on account of honour, and that I had, consequently, no informal statement to make him.

"The midwife," I added, "is absolutely unknown to me. She is most likely an abandoned woman, who with her worthy companion wants to cheat me of my money."

"I shall be delighted to think so," he answered, "but admitting the fact, see how chance favours her, and makes it a most difficult thing for you to prove your innocence.

"The young lady disappeared three months ago. She was known to be your intimate friend, you called upon her at all hours; you spent a considerable time with her the day before she disappeared, and no one knows what has become of her; but everyone's suspicions point at you, and paid spies are continually dogging your steps. The midwife sent me a requisition yesterday by her counsel, Vauversin. She says that the pregnant lady you brought to her house is the same whom Madame X ** C ** V ** is searching for. She also says that you both wore black dominoes, and the police have ascertained that you were both at the ball in black dominoes on the same night as that on which the midwife says you came to her house; you are also known to have left the ball-room together. All this, it is true, does not constitute full proof of your guilt, but it makes one tremble for your innocence."

"What cause have I to tremble?"

"What cause! Why, a false witness, easily enough hired for a little money, might swear with impunity that he saw you come from the opera together; and a coachman in the same way might swear he had taken you to the midwife's. In that case I should be compelled to order your arrest and examination, with a view to ascertain the name of the person whom you took with you. Do you realise that you are accused of procuring abortion; that three months have gone by without the lady's retreat having been discovered; that she is said to be dead? Do you realise, in short, what a very serious charge murder is?"

"Certainly; but if I die innocent, you will have condemned me wrongly, and will be more to be pitied than I."

"Yes, yes, but that wouldn't make your case any better. You may be sure, however, that I will not condemn an innocent man; but I am afraid that you will be a long time in prison before you succeed in proving your innocence. To be brief, you see that in twenty-four hours the case looks very bad, and in the course of a week it might look very much worse. My interest was aroused in your favour by the evident absurdity of the accusations, but it is the other circumstances about the case which make it a serious one for you. I can partly understand the circumstances, and the feelings of love and honour which bid you be silent. I have spoken to you, and I hope you will have no reserves with me. I will spare you all the unpleasant circumstances which threaten you, believing, as I do, that you are innocent. Tell me all, and be sure that the lady's honour will not suffer; but if, on the other hand, you are unfortunately guilty of the crimes laid to your charge, I advise you to be prudent, and to take steps which it is not my business to suggest. I warn you that in three or four days I shall cite you to the bar of the court, and that you will then find in me only the judge — just, certainly, but severe and impartial."

I was petrified, for these words showed me my danger in all its nakedness. I saw how I should esteem this worthy man's good offices, and said to him in quite another tone, that innocent as I was, I saw that my best course was to throw myself on his kindness respecting Mdlle. X ** C ** V **, who had committed no crime, but would lose her reputation by this unhappy business.

"I know where she is," I added, "and I may tell you that she would never have left her mother if she had not endeavoured to force her into a marriage she abhorred."

"Well, but the man is now married; let her return to her mother's house, and you will be safe, unless the midwife persists in maintaining that you incited her to procure abortion."

"There is no abortion in the matter; but other reasons prevent her returning to her family. I can tell you no more without obtaining the consent of another party. If I succeed in doing so I shall be able to throw the desired light on the question. Be kind enough to give me a second hearing on the day after to-morrow."

"I understand. I shall be delighted to hear what you have to say. I thank and congratulate you. Farewell!"

I was on the brink of the precipice, but I was determined to leave the kingdom rather than betray the honour of my poor dear sweetheart. If it had been possible, I would gladly have put an end to the case with money; but it was too late. I was sure that Farsetti had the chief hand in all this trouble, that he was continually on my track, and that he paid the spies mentioned by M. de Sartine. He it was who had set Vauversin, the barrister, after me, and I had no doubt that he would do all in his power to ruin me.

I felt that my only course was to tell the whole story to M. de Sartine, but to do that I required Madame du Rumain's permission.

The day after my interview with M. de Sartine I waited on Madame du Rumain at an early hour. Considering the urgency of the case I took the liberty of rousing her from her slumbers, and as soon as she was ready to receive me I told her all.

"There can be no hesitation in the matter," said this delightful woman. "We must make a confidant of M. de Sartine, and I will speak to him myself to-day without fail."

Forthwith she went to her desk and wrote to the criminal lieutenant asking him to see her at three o'clock in the afternoon. In less than an hour the servant returned with a note in which he said he would expect her. We agreed that I should come again in the evening, when she would tell me the result of her interview.

I went to the house at five o'clock, and had only a few minutes to wait.

"I have concealed nothing," said she; "he knows that she is on the eve of her confinement, and that you are not the father, which speaks highly for your generosity. I told him that as soon as the confinement was over, and the young lady had recovered her health, she would return to her mother, though she would make no confession, and that the child should be well looked after. You have now nothing to fear, and can calm yourself; but as the case must go on, you will be cited before the court the day after to-morrow. I advise you to see the clerk of the court on some pretext or other, and to make him accept a sum of money."

I was summoned to appear, and I appeared. I saw M. de Sartine, *sedentem pro tribunali*. At the end of the sitting he told

me that he was obliged to remand me, and that during my remand I must not leave Paris or get married, as all my civil rights were in suspense pending the decision. I promised to follow his commands.

I acknowledged in my examination that I was at the ball in a black domino on the night named in my accusation, but I denied everything else. As for Mdlle. X ** C ** V **, I said that neither I nor anyone of her family had any suspicion that she was with child.

Recollecting that I was an alien, and that this circumstance might make Vauversin call for my arrest, on the plea that I might fly the kindgom, I thought the moment opportune for making interest with the clerk of the court, and I accordingly paid him a visit. After telling him of my fears, I slipped into his hand a packet of three hundred louis, for which I did not ask for a receipt, saying that they were to defray expenses if I were mulcted in costs. He advised me to require the midwife to give bail for her appearance, and I told my attorney to do so; but, four days after, the following incident took place:

I was walking in the Temple Gardens, when I was accosted by a Savoyard, who gave me a note in which I was informed that somebody in an alley, fifty paces off, wanted to speak to me. "Either a love affair or a challenge," I said to myself, "let's see." I stopped my carriage, which was following me, and went to the place.

I cannot say how surprised I was to see the wretched Castel-Bajac standing before me. "I have only a word to say," said he, when he saw me. "We will not be overheard here. The midwife is quite sure that you are the man who brought a pregnant lady to her, but she is vexed that you are accused of making away with her. Give her a hundred louis; she will then declare to the court that she has been mistaken, and your trouble will be ended. You need not pay the money till she has made her declaration; we will take your word for it. Come with me and talk it over with Vauversin. I am sure he will persuade you to do as I suggest. I know where to find him, follow me at some distance."

I had listened to him in silence, and I was delighted to see that the rascals were betraying themselves. "Very good," said I to the fellow, "you go on, and I will follow." I went after

him to the third floor of a house in the Rue aux Ours, where I found Vauversin the barrister. No sooner had I arrived than he went to business without any prefatory remarks.

"The midwife," he said, "will call on you with a witness apparently with the intention of maintaining to your face that you are her man; *but she won't be able to recognise you.* She will then proceed with the witness to the court, and will declare that she has made a mistake, and the criminal lieutenant will forthwith put an end to the proceedings. You will thus be certain of gaining your case against the lady's mother."

I thought the plan well conceived, and said that they would find me at the Temple any day up to noon.

"But the midwife wants a hundred louis badly."

"You mean that the worthy woman rates her perjury at that price. Well, never mind, I will pay the money, and you may trust to my word; but I can't do so before she has taken oath to her mistake before the court."

"Very good, but you must first give me twenty-five louis to reimburse me for my costs and fees."

"Certainly, if you will give me a formal receipt for the money."

He hesitated at first, but after talking it over the money proved too strong a bait, and he wrote out the receipt and I gave him twenty-five louis. He thanked me, and said that though Madame X ** C ** V ** was his client, he would let me know confidentially how best to put a stop to the proceedings. I thanked him with as much gratitude as if I had really intended to make use of his services, and I left to write and tell M. de Sartine what had taken place.

Three days afterwards I was told that a man and woman wanted to see me. I went down and asked the woman what she wanted.

"I want to speak to M. Casanova."

"I am he."

"Then I have made a mistake, for which I hope you will forgive me."

Her companion smiled, and they went off.

The same day Madame du Rumain had a letter from the abbess telling her that her young friend had given birth to a fine boy, who had been sent away to a place where he would be well

looked after. She stated that the young lady could not leave the convent for the next six weeks, at the end of which time she could return to her mother with a certificate which would protect her from all annoyance.

Soon after the midwife was put in solitary confinement, Castel-Bajac was sent to the Bicêtre, and Vauversin's name was struck off the rolls. The suit instituted against me by Madame X ** C ** V ** went on till her daughter reappeared, but I knew that I had nothing to fear. The girl returned to her mother about the end of August armed with a certificate from the abbess, who said she had been under her protection for four months, during which time she had never left the convent or seen any persons from outside. This was perfectly true, but the abbess added that her only reason for her going back to her family was that she had nothing more to dread from the attentions of M. de la Popelinière, and in this the abbess lied.

Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** profited by the delight of her mother in seeing her again safe and sound, and made her wait on M. de Sartine with the abbess's certificate, stop all proceedings against me, and withdraw all the charges she had made. Her daughter told her that if I liked I might claim damages for libel, and that if she did not wish to injure her reputation she would say nothing more about what had happened.

The mother wrote me a letter of the most satisfactory character, which I had registered in court, thus putting an end to the prosecution. In my turn I wrote to congratulate her on the recovery of her daughter, but I never set foot in her house again, to avoid any disagreeable scenes with Farsetti.

Mdlle. X ** C ** V ** could not stay any longer in Paris, where her tale was known to everyone, and Farsetti took her to Brussels with her sister Madelaine. Some time after, her mother followed her, and they then went on to Venice, and there in three years' time she became a great lady. Fifteen years afterwards I saw her again, and she was a widow, happy enough apparently, and enjoying a great reputation on account of her rank, wit, and social qualities, but our connection was never renewed.

In four years the reader will hear more of Castel-Bajac. Towards the end of the same year (1759), before I went to Holland, I spent several hundred francs to obtain the release of the midwife.

I lived like a prince, and men might have thought me happy, but I was not. The enormous expenses I incurred, my love of spending money, and magnificent pleasures, warned me, in spite of myself, that there were rocks ahead. My business would have kept me going for a long time, if custom had not been paralysed by the war; but as it was, I, like everybody else, experienced the effect of bad times. My warehouse contained four hundred pieces of stuffs with designs on them, but as I could not hope to dispose of them before the peace, and as peace seemed a long way off, I was threatened with ruin.

With this fear I wrote to Esther to get her father to give me the remainder of my money, to send me a sharp clerk, and to join in my speculation. M. d'O ** said that if I would set up in Holland he would become responsible for everything and give me half profits, but I liked Paris too well to agree to so good an offer. I was sorry for it afterwards.

I spent a good deal of money at my private house, but the chief expense of my life, which was unknown to others but which was ruining me, was incurred in connection with the girls who worked in my establishment. With my complexion and my pronounced liking for variety, a score of girls, nearly all of them pretty and seductive, as most Paris girls are, was a reef on which my virtue made shipwreck every day. Curiosity had a good deal to do with it, and they profited by my impatience to take possession by selling their favours dearly. They all followed the example of the first favourite, and everyone claimed in turn an establishment, furniture, money, and jewels; and I knew too little of the value of money to care how much they asked. My fancy never lasted longer than a week, and often waned in three or four days, and the last comer always appeared the most worthy of my attentions.

As soon as I had made a new choice I saw no more of my old loves, but I continued to provide for them, and that with a good deal of money. Madame d'Urfé, who thought I was rich, gave me no trouble. I made her happy by using my oracle to second the magical ceremonies of which she grew fonder every day, although she never attained her aim. Manon Baletti, however, grieved me sorely by her jealousy and her well-founded reproaches. She could not understand — and I did not wonder at it — how I could put off marrying her if I really loved her. She

accused me of deceiving her. Her mother died of consumption in our arms. Silvia had won my true friendship. I looked upon her as a most worthy woman, whose kindness of heart and purity of life deserved the esteem of all. I stayed in the family for three days after her death, sincerely sympathising with them in their affliction.

*Thus ended, as far as Casanova was concerned, the romantic history of Mdlle. X** C** V**; for when they met a few months later in Holland, where she was travelling with her family and the inevitable Farsetti, it was as strangers, without speaking or greeting. Fifteen years later they met once more in Venice, but then a social gulf, which neither attempted to bridge, separated the Dowager-Countess Orsini-Rosenberg and the shabby adventurer.*

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, writing to her daughter from Venice on October 3rd, 1758, informs her that three beautiful ladies, four including the Signora Madre, have just left Venice for London and warns her to be careful about associating with them should they attempt to make her acquaintance on the pretext of having known her mother in Venice. In view of the Signora Madre's self-assurance, she thinks it is well to tell her daughter that she herself has only met these ladies in public resorts and at the house of the British resident (John Murray, Casanova's friend), who, as one of their professed admirers, had forced his wife to receive them. The father of the three beauties, she adds, was an Englishman called Wynne, who is believed to have been well off. According to the gossip of the town, this Wynne had come to Venice shortly after the death of his wife. In search of distraction he had been introduced by his gondolier to a very handsome Greek girl, who took his fancy and, after having presented him with three daughters, finally induced him to marry her. Shortly after the family had been increased by two sons, Wynne died, leaving each of his daughters fifteen hundred pounds. In order to receive this inheritance Mrs. Wynne had already been to England with her children and there proved the legality of her marriage. After her return to Venice all the young men were making love to her. It seems that the oldest daughter speaks English. In any case, it would be better to have as little to do with them as possible. On December 5th Lady Mary reports that the beautiful ladies are said to be still in Paris and have probably their reasons for stopping there.

*Herr Gustav Gugitz, the leading German authority on Casanova, has traced the whole story of Mdlle. X** C** V**.*[1] *Her real name was Giustiniana-Franca-Antonia. She was born in Venice on January 21st, 1736, as the first-fruit of the secret loves of Sir Richard Wynne and Anna Gazini, his Greek mistress. From this it appears that Casanova is again juggling with dates when he asserts that Giustina was twelve years old in 1751, when they first met, and sixteen in 1759, at the time of her Parisian adventure; to say nothing of the fact that, even according to his own chronology, she must have been at least twenty, since twelve plus eight generally amount to that sum.*

Of her voyage to England and her stay in Paris in 1751, Giustina Wynne was later herself to give a description in her Pièces morales, *as well as of her return to Venice the following year and her life there for the next six years, the infatuation she inspired in the aged breast of Joseph Smith, the British consul (the air of the lagoons seems to have been fatal to the morals and decorum of Britain's representatives), and her own ardent passion for a young nobleman, introduced to her by the incautious Smith.*

Strange fatality! This young nobleman was none other than Andrea Memmo, the scapegrace patrician, the boon companion of Casanova in his early exploits in Venice and one of the direct causes of his imprisonment under The Leads; the same Memmo who throughout his life kept a tender affection for his old friend, with whom he continued to correspond until, a pillar of the state and laden with honours, he passed from this world, preceding his correspondent in Dux by only a few years.

If we are to believe the Pièces morales, *the course of true love was thwarted by Mrs. Wynne, who was dreaming of a finer* parti *for her lovely daughter than the dissolute young patrician, the associate of the undesirable Casanova, whom she had snubbed in Paris. So Giustina was kept a prisoner at home, where, "surrounded by five hundred volumes," she says, she made the best of her captivity by cultivating her mind. The results of this régime were so beneficial that she found, on regaining her liberty, the ardour of her passion had spent itself in the pursuit of knowledge. The prospect of revisiting France and England and making a fine marriage contributed not a little to this change of sentiment, and it was with a light*

[1] Giacomo Casanova und sein Lebensroman, von Gustav Gugitz. Verlag Ed. Strache.

heart she bade farewell to that "tender friend," the still devoted Andrea, who accompanied the family as far as Milan.

Where and when the faux pas *was committed which was to involve her and Casanova in such trouble, it is difficult to say with absolute certainty. All that has been ascertained is that she was "in trouble" when she reached Paris. So it may well have been in Venice, and there can be little doubt that Memmo (the* Pièces morales *refer to the jilted lover as "M. M. . . .") was the other guilty party in this escapade. If we admit these probabilities as facts, it is equally credible that Memmo would have referred her to his friend Casanova in Paris as the "friend in need" and one especially qualified to help her out of her difficulties. It was doubtless owing to them and the resulting gossip in Paris that Giustina failed to find the* beau parti *of which she and her mother had been dreaming, either there or in England, where the family went on leaving France. But what she failed to find in these countries, she found waiting for her on her return to Venice next year in the person of the venerable Count Philipp, of the noble Austrian house of Orsini-Rosenberg, who represented his country as ambassador to the Venetian Republic. It was evidently decreed that Giustina was to finish as an old man's darling.*

For the four years that the marriage lasted, the count was doing his utmost to have his marriage sanctioned in Vienna, where his relatives, which included Prince Kaunitz, the brother of his first wife, looked askance on this mésalliance. *In vain he invoked the legitimate claims of the Wynne family to aristocratic rank, going even so far as to point out that the patrician Andrea Memmo had been a suitor for his wife's hand as proof that Giustina Wynne was considered a desirable match in Venice. His efforts and her own were unavailing to get the new countess "accepted" at court; and when he died, in Vienna, she retired to the family estate until she was finally able, after many efforts, to return to Venice. There she found the old welcome, and her house was soon the gathering-place of the most distinguished talents of the cosmopolitan* intelligenzia *residing in that city, among whom, we may suppose, was her former lover, Andrea Memmo, the ornament of the senate and the literary salons.*

Besides the Pièces morales, *already referred to, Giustina Wynne-Rosenberg published a series of works, all written in French and translated into several languages. On the appearance of the first of her books (1782), a description of the festivities given in Venice in honour of the visit of the future Czar Paul I., Casanova, then follow-*

ing the honourable profession of secret informer and moral censor for the Venetian government, took the opportunity of offering his respectful congratulations to the noble authoress, and at the same time sent her one of his own productions. These offerings were acknowledged in gracious though formal terms by the recipient.

For nine years Giustina continued to write and publish. The best of her works, entitled Les Morlaques, *a study of racial customs, aroused the admiration of Goethe and Charles Nodier. It is interesting to see among the list of her published works a pamphlet dedicated to Andrea Memmo on the occasion of the marriage of his oldest daughter to Louis Mocenigo.*

In 1791 Giustina died in Padua, mourned by the many friends and admirers which her talents, her charm, and her unfailing generosity to all who needed her help had earned for her. Two years later Andrea followed her, Casanova being the last of the three to lay down his pen for ever.

The avowal which Giustina noted in her Pièces morales *might well serve as epitaph for their several tombs, in Padua, in Venice, and in Bohemia:* "Ai-je donc fait bien moins de folies qu'un autre? — Tout au contraire: j'ai peut-être outre-passé la portion permise à chacun."

CHAPTER XII

"Moving On"

THE year 1760, Casanova being then thirty-five years of age, marks the beginning of those ceaseless wanderings across the map of Europe which were to continue for a quarter of a century. Though he will continue to speak of settling, of marrying, of turning monk, it is henceforth without conviction. Deep down in his heart he knows that he is no longer the master, but the sport of a capricious destiny — a destiny, it is true, which he has willed on himself by resolutely turning his back whenever Providence offered him the choice of safely navigating his barque along the charted ways which lead to safe harbours.

If we believe Casanova's own account, as set forth in his Memoirs, these migrations were prompted, for the most part, by the whims of his "genius," which would impel him to strike his tent and take to the road just when, as often as not, his pleasures and his interests

should have counselled him to stay. But although at first the mere lure of adventure, "the call of the road," doubtless did supply the main reason for seeking a change of scene, we shall find, or rather the various researches of commentators have found, that these peregrinations were due to less fantastic motives than those supplied by the Memoirs. During this second period of the Casanovian Odyssey it is more and more the warning hand of the law or the necessity of finding new hunting and poaching grounds, or both, which impels the nomad to "move on."

These were doubtless the reasons for the journey to Germany and Switzerland, which follows the nebulous Dutch adventure. There had been the usual trouble with bills of exchange and promissory notes in Holland, on the one hand; on the other, there was a promising prospect of recouping himself for his losses at Cologne, which, after the unlucky affair at Minden, had become the headquarters of the French troops. This for Casanova and his like meant the blandishments of Paris and the resources of the Palais-Royal — in other words, Paradise Regained — within a day's journey from the Dutch frontier.

The adventures in Cologne and Bonn at the court of the Prince-Elector, with their carnival background, belong almost exclusively to the realm of Casanovian myths, as German commentators (notably Herr Gugitz) have had no difficulty in proving. That he visited those cities is doubtless true; for, as already mentioned, the table there was richly served for all who shared the appetites of our hero. It is also at least probable that he for a while was able to satisfy the most urgent of these. But what seems definitely disproved is that he was ever anything more than a looker-on at the spectacle. As for the pièce de résistance *of the rich fare he asks us to enjoy with him in retrospect, the seduction of the burgomaster's wife and his clandestine meetings with her, this incredible story appears to have been imagined for the sorry purpose of wreaking a posthumous vengeance on a worthy magistrate whose duty compelled him to get rid of the undesirable characters that were disturbing the already troubled peace of Cologne.*

Following the Roman principle of converting defeat into triumph, Casanova — then reduced to pawning his wardrobe — makes his allegedly splendid entry into Switzerland, squandering money, frequenting the best society and the worst, which welcomes him wherever he goes, finally settling for a while in Soleure, where his "adorable"

Madame Dubois keeps house for him — in fact, all the usual attractions of the Casanova tour are there, including Helvetian orgies and, needless to say, international swindling and gaming. But do what he will to spice his dishes, there is a table-d'hôte flavour about the Swiss bill of fare which hints at Ersatz. It is not until we come to the big morceau, *for which he has evidently been preparing, the "Visit to Voltaire," that we find again the old verve, the incisive and eager note which informs the best passages of the Memoirs.*

Although no record exists to prove that this visit ever took place as described by Casanova, the severest of his critics (for example, C. Samaran, A. Ravà, G. Gugitz) incline, in this case, to give him the benefit of the doubt. Despite obvious emendations and exaggerations, the interview at Les Délices, where Voltaire was then residing, is well in keeping with the character of both protagonists. Se non è vero . . . .

"M. de Voltaire," said I, "this is the happiest moment of my life. I have been your pupil for twenty years, and my heart is full of joy to see my master."

"Honour me with your attendance on my course for twenty years more, and promise me that you will bring me my fees at the end of that time."

"Certainly, if you promise to wait for me."

This Voltairean sally made all present laugh, as was to be expected, for those who laugh keep one party in countenance at the other's expense, and the side which has the laughter is sure to win; this is the rule of good society.

I was not taken by surprise, and waited to have my revenge.

Just then two Englishmen came in and were presented to him.

"These gentlemen are English," said Voltaire; "I wish I were."

I thought the compliment false and out of place; for the gentlemen were obliged to reply out of politeness that they wished they had been French, or if they did not care to tell a lie they would be too confused to tell the truth. I believe every man of honour should put his own nation first.

A moment after, Voltaire turned to me again and said that as I was a Venetian I must know Count Algarotti.

"I know him, but not because I am a Venetian, as seven-eighths of my dear countrymen are not even aware of his existence."

"I should have said, as a man of letters."

"I know him from having spent two months with him at Padua, seven years ago, and what particularly attracted my attention was the admiration he professed for M. de Voltaire."

"That is flattering for me, but he has no need of admiring anyone."

"If Algarotti had not begun by admiring others, he would never have made a name for himself. As an admirer of Newton he endeavoured to teach the ladies to discuss the theory of light."

"Has he succeeded?"

"Not as well as M. de Fontenelle in his *Plurality of Worlds*; however, one may say he has succeeded."

"True. If you see him at Bologna, tell him I am expecting to hear from him about Russia. He can address the letters to my banker, Bianchi, at Milan, and they will be sent on to me."

"I will not fail to do so if I see him."

"I have heard that the Italians do not care for his style."

"No; all that he writes is full of French idioms. His style is wretched."

"But do not these French turns increase the beauty of your language?"

"They make it insufferable, as French would be mixed with Italian or German even though it were written by M. de Voltaire."

"You are right; every language should preserve its purity. Livy has been criticised on this account; his Latin is said to be tainted with patavinity."

"When I began to learn Latin, the Abbé Lazzarini told me he preferred Livy to Sallust."

"The Abbé Lazzarini, author of the tragedy, *Ulisse il giovine*? You must have been very young; I wish I had known him. But I knew the Abbé Conti well; the same that was Newton's friend, and whose four tragedies contain the whole of Roman history."

"I also knew and admired him. I was young, but I congratulated myself on being admitted into the society of these great men. It seems as if it were yesterday, though it is many years ago; and now in your presence my inferiority does not humiliate me. I wish to be the younger son of all humanity."

"Better so than to be the chief and eldest. May I ask you to what branch of literature you have devoted yourself?"

"To none; but that, perhaps, will come afterwards. In the meanwhile I read as much as I can, and try to study character on my travels."

"That is the way to become learned, but the book of humanity is too vast. Reading a history is the easier way."

"Yes, if history did not lie. One is not sure of the truth of the facts. It is tiring, while the study of the world is amusing. Horace, whom I know by heart, is my guide-book."

"Algarotti, too, is very fond of Horace. Of course you are fond of poetry?"

"It is my passion."

"Have you made many sonnets?"

"Ten or twelve I like, and two or three thousand which in all probability I have not read twice."

"The Italians are mad after sonnets."

"Yes; if one can call it a madness to desire to put thought into measured harmony. The sonnet is difficult because the thought has to be fitted exactly into the fourteen lines."

"It is Procrustes' bed, and that's the reason you have so few good ones. As for us, we have not one; but that is the fault of our language."

"And of the French genius, which considers that a thought when extended loses all its force."

"And you do not think so?"

"Pardon me, it depends on the kind of thought. A witty saying, for example, will not make a sonnet; in French or Italian it belongs to the domain of epigram."

"What Italian poet do you like best?"

"Ariosto; but I cannot say I love him better than the others, for he is my only love."

"You know the others, though?"

"I think I have read them all, but all their lights pale before Ariosto's. Fifteen years ago I read all you have written against him, and I said that you would retract when you had read his works."

"I am obliged to you for thinking that I had not read them. As a matter of fact I had done so, but I was young. I knew Italian very imperfectly, and being prejudiced by the learned Italians who adore Tasso I was unfortunate enough to publish a criticism on Ariosto which I thought my own, while it was

only the echo of those who had prejudiced me. I adore your Ariosto."

"Ah! M. de Voltaire, I breathe again. But be good enough to have the work in which you turned this great man into ridicule excommunicated."

"What use would that be? All my books are excommunicated; but I will give you a good proof of my retractation."

I was astonished! The great man began to recite the two fine passages from the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth cantos, in which the divine poet speaks of the conversation of Astolpho with St. John, and he did it without missing a single line or committing the slightest fault against the laws of prosody. He then pointed out the beauties of the passages with his natural insight and with a great man's genius. I could not have had anything better from the lips of the most skilled commentators in Italy. I listened to him with the greatest attention, hardly daring to breathe, and waiting for him to make a mistake, but I had my trouble for nothing. I turned to the company crying that I was more than astonished, and that all Italy should know what I had seen. "And I, sir," said the great man, "will let all Europe know of the amends I owe to the greatest genius our continent has produced."

Greedy of the praise which he deserved so well, Voltaire gave me the next day his translation, which Ariosto begins thus:

Quindi avvien che tra principi e signori.

The lines were as follows:

Les Papes, les Césars, apaisant leur querelle,
Jurent sur l'Evangile une paix éternelle;
Vous les voyez l'un de l'autre ennemis;
C'était pour se tromper qu'ils s'étaient réunis:
Nul serment n'est gardé, nul accord n'est sincère;
Quand la bouche a parlé, le cœur dit le contraire.
Du ciel qu'ils attestaient, ils bravaient le courroux:
L'intérêt est le Dieu qui les gouverne tous.

At the end of the recitation, which gained the applause of all who heard it, although not one of them knew Italian, Madame Denis, his niece, asked me if I thought the passage her uncle had just recited one of the finest the poet had written.

"Yes, but not the finest."

"It ought to be; for without it Signor Lodovico would not have gained his apotheosis."

"He has been canonised, then? I was not aware of that."

At these words the laugh, headed by Voltaire, went for Madame Denis. Everybody laughed except myself, and I continued to look perfectly serious.

Voltaire was vexed at not seeing me laugh like the rest, and asked me the reason.

"Are you thinking," said he, "of some more than human passage?"

"Yes," I answered.

"What passage is that?"

"The last thirty-six stanzas of the twenty-third canto, where the poet describes in detail how Roland became mad. Since the world has existed no one has discovered the springs of madness, unless Ariosto himself, who became mad in his old age. These stanzas are terrible, and I am sure they must have made you tremble."

"Yes, I remember they render love dreadful. I long to read them again."

"Perhaps the gentleman will be good enough to recite them," said Madame Denis, with a side glance at her uncle.

"Willingly," said I, "if you will have the goodness to listen to me."

"You have learnt them by heart, then, have you?" said Voltaire.

"Yes, it was a pleasure and no trouble. Since I was sixteen, I have read over Ariosto two or three times every year; it is my passion, and the lines have naturally become linked in my memory without my having given myself any pains to learn them. I know it all, except his long genealogies and his historical tirades, which fatigue the mind and do not touch the heart. It is only Horace that I know throughout, in spite of the often prosaic style of his epistles, which are certainly far from equalling Boileau's."

"Boileau is often too lengthy; I admire Horace, but as for Ariosto, with his forty long cantos, there is too much of him."

"It is fifty-one cantos, M. de Voltaire."

The great man was silent, but Madame Denis was equal to the occasion.

"Come, come," said she, "let us hear the thirty-six stanzas which earned the author the title of divine, and which are to make us tremble."

I then began, in an assured voice, but not in that monotonous tone adopted by the Italians, with which the French so justly reproach us. The French would be the best reciters if they were not constrained by the rhyme, for they say what they feel better than any other people. They have neither the passionate monotonous tone of my fellow-countrymen, nor the sentimentality of the Germans, nor the fatiguing mannerisms of the English; to every period they give its proper expression, but the recurrence of the same sounds partly spoils their recitation. I recited the fine verses of Ariosto, as if it had been rhythmic prose, animating it by the sound of my voice and the movements of my eyes, and by modulating my intonation according to the sentiments with which I wished to inspire my audience. They saw how hardly I could restrain my tears, and every eye was wet; but when I came to the stanza:

Poi ch'allargare il freno al dolor puote,
Chè resta solo, e senza altrui rispetto,
Giù dagli occhi rigando per le gote
Sparge un fiume di lacrime sul petto,

my tears coursed down my cheeks to such an extent that everyone began to sob. M. de Voltaire and Madame Denis threw their arms round my neck, but their embraces could not stop me, for Roland, to become mad, had to notice that he was in the same bed in which Angelica had lately been found in the arms of the too fortunate Medor, and I had to reach the next stanza. For my voice of sorrow and wailing I substituted the expression of that terror which arose naturally from the contemplation of his fury, which was in its effects like a tempest, a volcano, or an earthquake.

When I had finished I received with a sad air the congratulations of the audience. Voltaire cried:

"I always said so; the secret of drawing tears is to weep one's self, but they must be real tears, and to shed them the heart must be stirred to its depths. I am obliged to you, sir," he added, embracing me, "and I promise to recite the same stanzas myself to-morrow, and to weep like you."

He kept his word.

"It is astonishing," said Madame Denis, "that intolerant Rome should not have condemned the song of Roland."

"Far from it," said Voltaire, "Leo X. excommunicated whoever should dare to condemn it. The two great families of Este and Medici interested themselves in the poet's favour. Without that protection it is probable that the one line on the donation of Rome by Constantine to Silvester, where the poet speaks *puzza forte*, would have sufficed to put the whole poem under an interdict."

"I believe," said I, "that the line which has excited the most talk is that in which Ariosto throws doubt on the general resurrection. Ariosto," I added, "in speaking of the hermit who would have hindered Rhodomonte from getting possession of Isabella, widow of Zerbin, paints the African, who wearied of the hermit's sermons, seizes him and throws him so far that he dashes him against a rock, against which he remains in a dead swoon, so that *che al novissimo di forse fia desto.*"

This *forse*, which may possibly have only been placed there as a flower of rhetoric or as a word to complete the verse, raised a great uproar, which would doubtless have greatly amused the poet if he had had time!

"It is a pity," said Madame Denis, "that Ariosto was not more careful in these hyperbolical expressions."

"Be quiet, niece, they are full of wit. They are all golden grains, which are dispersed throughout the work in the best taste."

The conversation was then directed towards various topics, and at last we got to the Ecossaise we had played at Soleure.

They knew all about it.

M. de Voltaire said that if I liked to play it at his house he would write to M. de Chavigni to send the Lindane, and that he himself would play Montrose. I excused myself by saying that Madame ** was at Bâle and that I should be obliged to go on my journey the next day. At this he exclaimed loudly, aroused the whole company against me, and said at last that he should consider my visit as an insult unless I spared him a week at least of my society.

"Sir," said I, "I have only come to Geneva to have the honour of seeing you, and now that I have obtained that favour I have nothing more to do."

"Have you come to speak to me, or for me to speak to you?"

"In a measure, of course, to speak to you, but much more for you to speak to me."

"Then stay here three days at least; come to dinner every day, and we will have some conversation."

The invitation was so flattering and pressing that I could not refuse it with a good grace. I therefore accepted, and I then left to go and write.

I had not been back for a quarter of an hour when a syndic of the town, an amiable man, whom I had seen at M. de Voltaire's, and whose name I shall not mention, came and asked me to give him supper. "I was present," said he, "at your argument with the great man, and though I did not open my mouth I should much like to have an hour's talk with you." By way of reply, I embraced him, begging him to excuse my dressing-gown, and telling him that I should be glad if he would spend the whole night with me.

The worthy man spent two hours with me, without saying a word on the subject of literature, but to please me he had no need to talk of books, for he was a disciple of Epicurus and Socrates, and the evening was spent in telling little stories, in bursts of laughter, and in accounts of the various kinds of pleasure obtainable at Geneva.

Next morning, young Fox came to see me with the two Englishmen I had seen at M. de Voltaire's. They proposed a game of quinze, which I accepted, and after losing fifty louis I left off, and we walked about the town till dinner-time.

We found the Duc de Villars at Délices; he had come there to consult Dr. Tronchin, who had kept him alive for the last ten years.

I was silent during the repast, but at dessert, M. de Voltaire, knowing that I had reasons for not liking the Venetian government, introduced the subject; but I disappointed him, as I maintained that in no country could a man enjoy more perfect liberty than in Venice.

"Yes," said he, "provided he resigns himself to play the part of a dumb man."

And seeing that I did not care for the subject, he took me by the arm to his garden, of which, he said, he was the creator. The principal walk led to a pretty running stream.

"'Tis the Rhone," said he, "which I send into France."

"It does not cost you much in carriage, at all events," said I.

He smiled pleasantly and showed me the principal street of Geneva, and Mont Blanc, which is the highest point of the Alps.

Bringing back the conversation to Italian literature, he began to talk nonsense with much wit and learning, but always concluding with a false judgment. I let him talk on. He spoke of Homer, Dante, and Petrarch, and everybody knows what he thought of these great geniuses, but he did himself wrong in writing what he thought. I contented myself with saying that if these great men did not merit the esteem of those who studied them, it would at all events be a long time before they had to come down from the high place in which the praise of centuries had placed them.

The Duc de Villars and the famous Tronchin came and joined us. The doctor, a tall fine man, polite, eloquent without being a conversationalist, a learned physician, a man of wit, a favourite pupil of Boerhaave, without scientific jargon, or charlatanism, or self-sufficiency, enchanted me. His system of medicine was based on regimen, and to make rules he had to be a man of profound science. I have been assured, but can scarcely believe it, that he cured a consumptive patient of a secret disease by means of the milk of an ass, which he had submitted to thirty strong frictions of mercury by four sturdy porters.

As to Villars he also attracted my attention, but in quite a different way to Tronchin. On examining his face and manner I thought I saw before me a woman of seventy dressed as a man, thin and emaciated, but still proud of her looks, and with claims to past beauty. His cheeks and lips were painted, his eyebrows blackened, and his teeth were false; he wore a huge wig, which exhaled amber, and at his buttonhole was an enormous bunch of flowers which touched his chin. He affected a gracious manner, and he spoke so softly that it was often impossible to hear what he said. He was excessively polite and affable, and his manners were those of the Regency. His whole appearance was supremely ridiculous. I was told that in his youth he was a lover of the fair sex, but now that he was no longer good for anything he had modestly made himself into a woman, and had four pretty pets in his employ, who took turns in the disgusting duty of warming his old carcase at night.

Villars was governor of Provence, and had his back eaten up with cancer. In the course of nature he should have been buried ten years ago, but Tronchin kept him alive with his regimen and by feeding the wounds on slices of veal. Without this the cancer would have killed him. His life might well be called an artificial one.

I accompanied M. de Voltaire to his bedroom, where he changed his wig and put on another cap, for he always wore one on account of the rheumatism to which he was subject. I saw on the table the *Summa* of St. Thomas, and among other Italian poets the *Secchia Rapita* of Tassoni.

"This," said Voltaire, "is the only tragi-comic poem which Italy has. Tassoni was a monk, a wit, and a genius as well as a poet."

"I will grant his poetical ability but not his learning, for he ridiculed the system of Copernicus, and said that if his theories were followed astronomers would not be able to calculate lunations or eclipses."

"Where does he make that ridiculous remark?"

"In his academical discourses."

"I have not read them, but I will get them."

He took a pen and noted the name down, and said:

"But Tassoni has criticised Petrarch very ingeniously."

"Yes, but he has dishonoured taste and literature, like Muratori."

"Here he is. You must allow that his learning is immense."

"*Est ubi peccat.*"

Voltaire opened a door, and I saw a hundred great files full of papers.

"That's my correspondence," said he. "You see before you nearly fifty thousand letters, to which I have replied."

"Have you a copy of your answers?"

"Of a good many of them. That's the business of a servant of mine, who has nothing else to do."

"I know plenty of booksellers who would give a good deal to get hold of your answers."

"Yes; but look out for the booksellers when you publish anything, if you have not yet begun; they are greater robbers than Barabbas."

"I shall not have anything to do with these gentlemen till I am an old man."

"Then they will be the scourge of your old age."

Thereupon I quoted a Macaronic verse by Merlin Coccæus.

"Where's that from?"

"It's a line from a celebrated poem in twenty-four cantos."

"Celebrated?"

"Yes; and, what is more, worthy of being celebrated; but to appreciate it one must understand the Mantuan dialect."

"I could make it out, if you could get me a copy."

"I shall have the honour of presenting you with one to-morrow."

"You will oblige me extremely."

We had to leave his room and spend two hours in the company, talking over all sorts of things. Voltaire displayed all the resources of his brilliant and fertile wit, and charmed everyone in spite of his sarcastic observations, which did not even spare those present, but he had an inimitable manner of lancing a sarcasm without wounding a person's feelings. When the great man accompanied his witticisms with a graceful smile he could always get a laugh.

He kept up a notable establishment and an excellent table, a rare circumstance with his poetic brothers, who are rarely favourites of Plutus as he was. He was then sixty years old, and had a hundred and twenty thousand francs a year. It has been said maliciously that this great man enriched himself by cheating his publishers; whereas the fact was that he fared no better than any other author, and instead of duping them was often their dupe. The Cramers must be excepted, whose fortune he made. Voltaire had other ways of making money than by his pen; and as he was greedy of fame, he often gave his works away on the sole condition that they were to be printed and published. During the short time I was with him, I was a witness of such a generous action; he made a present to his bookseller of the *Princess of Babylon*, a charming story which he had written in three days.

After a good night's sleep I awoke in an active mood, and began to write a letter to Voltaire in blank verse, which cost me four times the pains that rhymed verses would have done. I sent it to him with the poem of Théophile Falengue, but I made a mistake in doing so, as I might have known he would not care for it; one cannot appreciate what one does not understand. I

then went to Mr. Fox, where I found the two Englishmen, who offered me my revenge. I lost a hundred louis, and was glad to see them set out for Lausanne.

At noon I went to M. de Voltaire's. He was not to be seen, but Madame Denis consoled me for his absence. She had wit, learning without pretension, taste, and a great hatred for the King of Prussia, whom she called a villain. She asked about my beautiful housekeeper, and congratulated me on having married her to a respectable man. Although I feel now that she was quite right, I was far from thinking so then; the impression was too fresh on my mind. Madame Denis begged me to tell her how I had escaped from The Leads, but as the story was rather a long one I promised to satisfy her another time.

M. de Voltaire did not dine with us; he appeared, however, at five o'clock, holding a letter in his hand.

"Do you know," said he, "the Marquis Albergati Capacelli, senator of Bologna, and Count Paradisi?"

"I do not know Paradisi, but I know Albergati by sight and by reputation; he is not a senator, but one of the Forty, who at Bologna are Fifty."

"Dear me! That seems rather a riddle!"

"Do you know him?"

"No, but he has sent me Goldoni's *Theatre*, the translation of my *Tancred*, and some Bologna sausages, and he says he will come and see me."

"He will not come; he is not such a fool."

"How a fool? Would there be anything foolish in coming to see me?"

"Certainly not, as far as you are concerned; but very much so for his own sake."

"Would you mind telling me why?"

"He knows what he would lose; for he enjoys the idea you seem to have of him, and if he came you would see his nothingness, and good-bye to the illusion. He is a worthy man with six thousand sequins a year, and a craze for the theatre. He is a good actor enough, and has written several comedies in prose, but they are fit neither for the study nor the stage."

"You certainly give him a coat which does not make him look any bigger."

"I assure you it is not quite small enough."

"But tell me how he can belong to the Forty and the Fifty?"

"Just as at Bâle noon is at eleven."

"I understand; just as your Council of Ten is composed of seventeen members."

"Exactly; but the cursed Forty of Bologna are men of another kind."

"Why cursed?"

"Because they are not subject to the fisc, and are thus enabled to commit whatever crimes they like with perfect impunity; all they have got to do is to live outside the state borders on their revenues."

"That is a blessing, and not a curse; but let me return to our subject. I suppose the Marquis Albergati is a man of letters?"

"He writes well enough, but he is fond of the sound of his own voice, his style is prolix, and I don't think he has much brains."

"He is an actor, I think you said?"

"Yes, and a very good one; above all, when he plays the lover's part in one of his own plays."

"Is he a handsome man?"

"Yes, on the stage, but not elsewhere; his face lacks expression."

"But his plays give satisfaction?"

"Not to persons who understand play writing; they would be hissed if they were intelligible."

"And what do you think of Goldoni?"

"I have the highest opinion of him. Goldoni is the Italian Molière."

"Why does he call himself poet to the Duke of Parma?"

"No doubt to prove that a wit as well as a fool has his weak points; in all probability the duke knows nothing about it. He also calls himself a barrister, though he is such only in his own imagination. Goldoni is a good play writer, and nothing more. Everybody in Venice knows me for his friend, and I can therefore speak of him with authority. He does not shine in society, and in spite of the fine satire of his works he is a man of an extremely gentle disposition."

"So I have been told. He is poor, and wants to leave Venice. The managers of the theatres where they play his pieces will not like that."

"People talked about getting him a pension, but the project has been relegated to the Greek Kalends, as they said that if he had a pension he would write no more."

"Cumæ refused to give a pension to Homer, for fear that all the blind men would ask for a pension."

We spent a pleasant day, and he thanked me heartily for the copy of the *Macaronicon*, which he promised to read. He introduced me to a Jesuit he had in his household, who was called Adam, and he added, after telling me his name, "not the first Adam." I was told afterwards that Voltaire used to play backgammon with him, and when he lost he would throw the dice and the box at his head. If Jesuits were treated like that all the world over, perhaps we should have none but inoffensive Jesuits at last, but that happy time is still far off.

After having enjoyed a calm and refreshing sleep for ten hours, I felt myself able to enjoy the delightful society of M. de Voltaire. I went to his house, but I was disappointed in my hopes, as it pleased the great man to be in a fault-finding and sarcastic mood the whole day. He knew I had to leave on the morrow.

He began by thanking me at table for my present of Merlin Coccæus.

"You certainly gave it me with good intentions," said he, "but I owe you no thanks for praising it so highly, as you made me lose four hours in reading nonsense."

I felt my hair stand on end, but I mastered my emotions, and told him quietly enough that one day, perhaps, he would find himself obliged to praise the poem more highly than I had done. I quoted several instances of the insufficiency of a first perusal.

"That's true," said he; "but as for your Merlin, I will read him no more. I have put him beside Chapelain's *Pucelle*."

"Which pleases all the critics, in spite of its bad versification, for it is a good poem, and Chapelain was a real poet though he wrote bad verses. I cannot overlook his genius."

My freedom must have shocked him, and I might have guessed it when he told me he had put the *Macaronicon* beside the *Pucelle*. I knew that there was a poem of the same title in circulation which passed for Voltaire's; but I also knew that he disavowed it, and I thought that would make him conceal the vexation my explanation must have caused him. It was not so, however; he contradicted me sharply, and I closed with him.

"Chapelain," said I, "has the merit of having rendered his subject-matter pleasant, without pandering to the tastes of his readers by saying things shocking to modesty and piety. So thinks my master Crébillon."

"Crébillon! You cite a weighty authority. But how is my friend Crébillon your master, may I ask?"

"He taught me to speak French in less than two years, and as a mark of my gratitude I translated his *Radamiste* into Italian Alexandrines. I am the first Italian who has dared to use this metre in our language."

"The first? I beg your pardon, as that honour belongs to my friend Pierre Jacques Martelli."

"I am sorry to be obliged to tell you that you are making a mistake."

"Why, I have his works, printed at Bologna, in my room!"

"I don't deny that, I am only talking about the metre used by Martelli. What you are thinking of must be verses of fourteen syllables, without alternative masculine and feminine rhymes. However, I confess that he thinks he has imitated the French Alexandrines, and his preface made me explode with laughter. Did you read it?"

"Read it? I always read prefaces, and Martelli proves there that his verses have the same effect in Italian as our Alexandrine verses have in French."

"Exactly, that's what's so amusing. The worthy man is quite mistaken, and I only ask you to listen to what I have to say on the subject. Your masculine verse has only twelve poetic syllables, and the feminine thirteen. All Martelli's lines have fourteen syllables, except those that finish with a long vowel, which at the end of a line always counts as two syllables. You will observe that the first hemistich in Martelli always consists of seven syllables, while in French it only has six. Your friend Pierre Jacques was either stone deaf or very hard of hearing."

"Then you have followed our theory of versification rigorously."

"Just so, in spite of the difficulty, as nearly all our words end with a short syllable."

"What reception has been accorded to your innovation?"

"It has not been found pleasing, because nobody knows how to recite my verses; but I hope to triumph when I deliver them myself before our literary clubs."

"Do you remember any of your version of the *Radamiste?*"

"I remember it all."

"You have a wonderful memory; I should be glad to hear it."

I began to recite the same scene that I had recited to Crébillon ten years before, and I thought M. de Voltaire listened with pleasure.

"It doesn't strike one as at all harsh," said he.

This was the highest praise he would give me. In his turn the great man recited a passage from *Tancred*, which had not as yet been published, and which was afterwards considered, and rightly, as a masterpiece.

We should have got on very well if we had kept to that, but on my quoting a line of Horace to praise one of his pieces, he said that Horace was a great master who had given precepts which would never be out of date. Thereupon I answered that he himself had violated one of them, but that he had violated it grandly.

"Which is that?"

"You do not write, *Contentus paucis lectoribus.*"

"If Horace had had to combat the hydra-headed monster of superstition, he would have written as I have written — for all the world."

"It seems to me that you might spare yourself the trouble of combating what you will never destroy."

"That which I cannot finish others will, and I shall always have the glory of being the first in the field."

"Very good; but supposing you succeed in destroying superstition, what are you going to put in its place?"

"I like that. If I deliver the race of man from a wild beast which is devouring it, am I to be asked what I intend to put in its place?"

"It does not devour it; on the contrary, it is necessary to its existence."

"Necessary to its existence! That is a horrible blasphemy, the falsity of which will be seen in the future. I love the human race; I would fain see men like myself, free and happy, and superstition and freedom cannot go together. Where do you find an enslaved and yet a happy people?"

"You wish, then, to see the people sovereign?"

"God forbid! There must be a sovereign to govern the masses."

"In that case you must have superstition, for without it the masses will never obey a mere man decked with the name of monarch."

"I will have no monarch; the word expresses despotism, which I hate as I do slavery."

"What do you mean, then? If you wish to put the government in the hands of one man, such a man, I maintain, will be a monarch."

"I would have a sovereign ruler of a free people, of which he is the chief by an agreement which binds them both, which would prevent him from becoming a tyrant."

"Addison will tell you that such a sovereign is a sheer impossibility. I agree with Hobbes, of two evils choose the least. A nation without superstition would be a nation of philosophers, and philosophers would never obey. The people will only be happy when they are crushed and downtrodden, and bound in chains."

"This is horrible; and you are of the people yourself. If you have read my works you must have seen how I show that superstition is the enemy of kings."

"Read your works? I have read and re-read them, especially in places where I have differed from you. Your ruling passion is the love of humanity. *Est ubi peccas.* This blinds you. Love humanity, but love it as it is. It is not fit to receive the blessings you would lavish on it, and which would only make it more wretched and perverse. Leave men their devouring monster, it is dear to them. I have never laughed so heartily as at Don Quixote assailed by the galley-slaves whom his generosity had set free."

"I am sorry that you have such a bad opinion of your fellow-creatures. And, by the way, tell me whether there is freedom in Venice."

"As much as can be expected under an aristocracy. Our liberty is not so great as that which the English enjoy, but we are content."

"Even under The Leads?"

"My imprisonment was certainly despotic; but as I had knowingly abused my liberty I am satisfied that the government was within its rights in shutting me up without the usual formalities."

"All the same, you made your escape."

"I used my rights as they had used theirs."

"Very good! But as far as I can see, no one in Venice is really free."

"That may be; but you must agree that the essence of freedom consists in thinking you have it."

"I shall not agree to that so easily. You and I see liberty from very different points of view. The aristocrats, the members of the government even, are not free at Venice; for example, they cannot travel without permission."

"True, but that is a restriction of their own making to preserve their power. Would you say that a Bernese is not free, because he is subject to the sumptuary laws, which he himself had made?"

"Well, well, I wish the people made the laws everywhere."

After this lively answer, he abruptly asked me what part I came from.

"From Roche," said I. "I should have been very sorry to leave Switzerland without seeing the famous Haller. In my travels I render homage to my learned contemporaries, and you come the last and best."

"You must have liked Haller."

"I spent three of the happiest days of my life with him."

"I congratulate you. He is a great man and worthy of all honour."

"I think as you do, and I am glad to hear you doing him justice; I am sorry he was not so just towards you."

"Well, you see we may be both of us mistaken."

At this reply, the quickness of which constituted its chief merit, everybody present began to laugh and applaud.

No more was said of literature, and I became a silent actor till M. de Voltaire retired, when I approached Madame Denis, and asked her if she had any commands for me at Rome. I went home well pleased at having compelled the giant of intellect to listen to reason, as I then thought foolishly enough; but there was a rankling feeling left in my heart against him which made me, ten years later, criticise all he had written.

I am sorry now for having done so, though on reading my censures over again I find that in many places I was right. I should have done better, however, to have kept silence, to have

respected his genius, and to have suspected my own opinions. I should have considered that if it had not been for those quips and cranks which made me hate him on the third day, I should have thought him wholly sublime. This thought alone should have silenced me, but an angry man always thinks himself right. Posterity on reading my attack will rank me among the Zoyluses, and the humble apology I now make to the great man's shades may not be read.

If we meet in the halls of Pluto, the more peccant parts of our mortal nature purged away, all will be made up; he will receive my heartfelt apologies, and he will be my friend, I his sincere admirer.

I spent part of the night and the whole of the following day in writing down my conversations with Voltaire, and they amounted nearly to a volume, of which I have only given a mere abridgment. I set out the next day, after dining with the syndic, who accompanied me as far as Anneci, where I spent the night. Next day I dined at Aix, with the intention of lying at Chambéri, but my destiny ordered otherwise.

CHAPTER XIII

Sentimental Journeyings

*FROM Switzerland Casanova makes his way southward, stopping in Aix (the modern Aix-les-Bains), then, as now, a watering- and gambling-place, where he falls in with his "second M** M **," a nun in distress, who bears so strange a resemblance to his Venetian nun that he recapitulates his amours for the sake of "auld lang syne." Leaving in a hurry, ostensibly to escape the snares of a dangerous couple of adventurers, he makes for Grenoble. There he casts a horoscope for Mdlle. Ramon, which foretells that she will shortly become the king's mistress, a prophecy the young lady and her family promptly set to work to realise by removing to Paris, where, needless to say, her destiny was accomplished as announced. In a pious mood he makes the pilgrimage to the Fountain of Vaucluse, evokes the shades of Laura and Petrach, embracing and "watering with his tears" the ground on which they trod, to the astonishment of a stolid British couple, the Chevalier*

Stuard (sic.) *and his frigid companion, whom he apostrophises in true Rousseauesque fashion in an impassioned improvisation on the divine passion of love.*

Via Marseilles, Nice, and Genoa, meeting with the usual adventures, Casanova gains Florence, where, to his joy and amazement, he finds Teresa Lanti, whom he had met and loved so well in Rimini seventeen years ago, when, as Bellino, she was masquerading as a male soprano. Teresa, now a famous singer, after accumulating riches, though happily married, is still faithful to his memory. Her masquerading days are not over, however, for the handsome young brother who accompanies her is, in fact, none other than the fruit of her youthful passion for Casanova. Nothing moves the latter's entrails so deeply as the sight of his progeny, wherever and whenever he encounters it during his travels. The quartet, husband, wife-mistress, brother-son, father-lover, spend blissful hours together. They might have been prolonged, had not poor Casanova, once more the victim of designing villains whom he had trusted, received the order to leave Tuscany.

It was during this visit to Tuscany that Casanova formed two acquaintances destined to be the cause of future trouble to him: Giacomo Passano, alias Ascanio Pogamas, and the dancer Corticelli — arcades ambo. *When shortly he will be looking for accomplices to carry out the reincarnation hoax on the Marquise d'Urfé, the memory of their roguish faces will recur to him.*

From Florence to Rome was a matter of thirty-six hours — just as long as it takes a Casanova to go from one Thérèse to another, and no longer, as we shall see.

It was midnight when I passed under the Porta del Popolo, for one may enter the Eternal City at any time. I was then taken to the custom-house, which is always open, and my mails were examined. The only thing they are strict about at Rome is books, as if they feared the light. I had about thirty volumes, all more or less against the Papacy, religion, or the virtues inculcated thereby. I had resolved to surrender them without any dispute, as I felt tired and wanted to go to bed, but the clerk told me politely to count them and leave them in his charge for the night, and he would bring them to my hotel in the morning. I did so, and he kept his word. He was well enough pleased when he touched the two sequins with which I rewarded him.

I put up at the Ville de Paris, in the Piazza di Spagna. It

is the best inn in the town. All the world, I found, was drowned in sleep, but when they let me in they asked me to wait on the ground-floor while a fire was lighted in my room. All the seats were covered with dresses, petticoats, and chemises, and I heard a small feminine voice begging me to sit on her bed. I approached and saw a laughing mouth, and two black eyes shining like carbuncles.

"What splendid eyes!" said I, "let me kiss them."

By way of reply she hid her head under the coverlet.

"Who are you, my angel?"

"I am Thérèse, the innkeeper's daughter, and this is my sister." There was another girl beside her, whom I had not seen, as her head was under the bolster.

"How old are you?"

"Nearly seventeen."

"I hope I shall see you in my room to-morrow morning."

"Have you any ladies with you?"

"No."

"That's a pity, as we never go to the gentlemen's rooms."

"Lower the coverlet a little; I can't hear what you say."

"It's too cold."

"Dear Thérèse, your eyes make me feel as if I were in flames."

She put her head back at this, and I grew daring. I caressed her in a somewhat lively manner, and when she let me see her face I thought I saw delight rather than anger in her eyes and on her cheeks, and I felt hopeful with regard to her. I was just going to begin again, when a handsome chambermaid came to tell me that my room was ready and my fire lighted.

"Farewell till to-morrow," said I to Thérèse, but she only answered by turning on her side to go to sleep.

I went to bed after ordering dinner for one o'clock, and I slept till noon, dreaming of Thérèse. When I woke up, Costa told me that he had found out where my brother lived, and had left a note at the house. This was my brother Jean, then about thirty, and a pupil of the famous Raphael Mengs. This painter was then deprived of his pension on account of a war which obliged the King of Poland to live at Warsaw, as the Prussians occupied the whole electorate of Saxe. I had not seen my brother for ten years, and I kept our meeting as a holiday. I was sitting down to table when he came, and we embraced each

other with transport. We spent an hour in telling, he his small adventures, and I my grand ones, and he told me that I should not stay at the hotel, which was too dear, but come and live at the Chevalier Mengs's house, which contained an empty room, where I could stay at a much cheaper rate.

"As to your table, there is a restaurant in the house where one can get a capital meal."

"Your advice is excellent," said I, "but I have not the courage to follow it, as I am in love with my landlord's daughter"; and I told him what had happened the night before.

"That's a mere nothing," said he, laughing; "you can cultivate her acquaintance without staying in the house."

I let myself be persuaded, and I promised to come to him the following day; and then we proceeded to take a walk about Rome.

I had many interesting memories of my last visit, and I wanted to renew my acquaintance with those who had interested me at that happy age when such impressions are so durable because they touch the heart rather than the mind; but I had to make up my mind to a good many disappointments, considering the space of time that had elapsed since I had been in Rome.

I went to the Minerva to find Donna Cecilia; she was no more in this world. I found out where her daughter Angelica lived, and I went to see her, but she gave me a poor reception, and said that she really scarcely remembered me.

"I can say the same," I replied, "for you are not the Angelica I used to know. Good-bye, madam!"

The lapse of time had not improved her personal appearance. I found out also where the printer's son, who had married Barbaruccia, lived, but I put off the pleasure of seeing him till another time, and also my visit to the Reverend Father Georgi, who was a man of great repute in Rome. Gaspar Vivaldi had gone into the country.

My brother took me to Madame Cherubini. I found her mansion to be a splendid one, and the lady welcomed me in the Roman manner. I thought her pleasant and her daughters still more so, but I thought the crowd of lovers too large and too miscellaneous. There was too much luxury and ceremony, and the girls, one of whom was as fair as Love himself, were too polite to everybody. An interesting question was put to me, to

which I answered in such a manner as to elicit another question but to no purpose. I saw that the rank of my brother, who had introduced me, prevented my being thought a person of any consequence, and on hearing an abbé say, "He's Casanova's brother," I turned to him and said:

"That's not correct; you should say Casanova's my brother."

"That comes to the same thing."

"Not at all, my dear abbé."

I said these words in a tone which commanded attention, and another abbé said:

"The gentleman is quite right; it does *not* come to the same thing."

The first abbé made no reply to this. The one who had taken my part, and was my friend from that moment, was the famous Winckelmann, who was unhappily assassinated at Trieste twelve years afterwards.

While I was talking to him, Cardinal Alexander Albani arrived. Winckelmann presented me to his eminence, who was nearly blind. He talked to me a great deal, without saying anything worth listening to. As soon as he heard that I was the Casanova who had escaped from The Leads, he said in a somewhat rude tone that he wondered I had the hardihood to come to Rome, where on the slightest hint from the State Inquisitors at Venice an *ordine santissimo* would re-consign me to my prison. I was annoyed by this unseemly remark, and replied in a dignified voice:

"It is not my hardihood in coming to Rome that your eminence should wonder at, but a man of any sense would wonder at the Inquisitors if they had the hardihood to issue an *ordine santissimo* against me; for they would be perplexed to allege any crime in me as a pretext for thus infamously depriving me of my liberty."

This reply silenced his eminence. He was ashamed at having taken me for a fool, and to see that I thought him one. Shortly after, I left and never set foot in that house again.

The Abbé Winckelmann went out with my brother and myself, and as he came with me to my hotel he did me the honour of staying to supper. Winckelmann was the second volume of the celebrated Abbé de Voisenon. He called for me next day, and we went to Villa Albani to see the Chevalier Mengs, who was then living there and painting a ceiling.

My landlord Roland (who knew my brother) paid me a visit at supper. Roland came from Avignon and was fond of good living. I told him I was sorry to be leaving him to stay with my brother, because I had fallen in love with his daughter Thérèse, although I had only spoken to her for a few minutes, and had only seen her head.

"You saw her in bed, I will bet."

"Exactly, and I should very much like to see the rest of her. Would you be so kind as to ask her to step up for a few minutes?"

"With all my heart."

She came upstairs, seeming only too glad to obey her father's summons. She had a lithe, graceful figure, her eyes were of surpassing brilliancy, her features exquisite, her mouth charming; but taken altogether I did not like her so well as before. In return, my poor brother became enamoured of her to such an extent that he ended by becoming her slave. He married her next year, and two years afterwards he took her to Dresden. I saw her five years later with a pretty baby; but after ten years of married life she died of consumption.

I found Mengs at the Villa Albani; he was an indefatigable worker, and extremely original in his conceptions. He welcomed me, and said he was glad to be able to lodge me at his house in Rome, and that he hoped to return home himself in a few days, with his whole family. I was astonished with the Villa Albani. It had been built by Cardinal Alexander, and had been wholly constructed from antique materials to satisfy the cardinal's love for classic art; not only the statues and the vases, but the columns, the pedestals — in fact, everything was Greek. He was a Greek himself, and had a perfect knowledge of antique work, and had contrived to spend comparatively little money compared with the masterpiece he had produced. If a sovereign monarch had had a villa like the cardinal's built, it would have cost him fifty million francs, but the cardinal made a much cheaper bargain.

As he could not get any ancient ceilings, he was obliged to have them painted, and Mengs was undoubtedly the greatest and the most laborious painter of his age. It is a great pity that death carried him off in the midst of his career, as otherwise he would have enriched the stores of art with numerous master-

pieces. My brother never did anything to justify his title of pupil of this great artist. When I come to my visit to Spain in 1767, I shall have some more to say about Mengs.

As soon as I was settled with my brother I hired a carriage, a coachman, and a footman, whom I put into fancy livery, and I called on Monsignor Cornaro, auditor of the rota, with the intention of making my way into good society, but fearing lest he as a Venetian might get compromised, he introduced me to Cardinal Passionei, who spoke of me to the sovereign pontiff.

Before I pass on to anything else, I will inform my readers of what took place on the occasion of my second visit to this odd cardinal, a great enemy of the Jesuits, a wit, and a man of letters.

Cardinal Passionei received me in a large hall where he was writing. He begged me to wait till he had finished, but he could not ask me to take a seat as he occupied the only chair that his vast room contained.

When he had put down his pen, he rose, came to me, and after informing me that he would tell the Holy Father of my visit, he added:

"My brother Cornaro might have made a better choice, as he knows the Pope does not like me."

"He thought it better to choose the man who is esteemed than the man who is merely liked."

"I don't know whether the Pope esteems me, but I am sure he knows I don't esteem him. I both liked and esteemed him before he was pope, and I concurred in his election, but since he has worn the tiara it's a different matter; he has shown himself too much of a *coglione*."

"The conclave ought to have chosen your eminence."

"No, no; I'm a root-and-branch reformer, and my hand would not have been stayed for fear of the vengeance of the guilty, and God alone knows what would have come of that. The only cardinal fit to be pope was Tamburini; but it can't be helped now. I hear people coming; good-bye, come again to-morrow."

What a delightful thing to have heard a cardinal call the Pope a fool, and name Tamburini as a fit person. I did not lose a moment in noting this pleasant circumstance down: it was too precious a morsel to let slip. But who was Tamburini? I had never heard of him. I asked Winckelmann, who dined with me.

"He's a man deserving of respect for his virtues, his character, his firmness, and his far-seeing intelligence. He has never disguised his opinions of the Jesuits, whom he styles the fathers of deceits, intrigues, and lies; and that's what made Passionei mention him. I think, with him, that Tamburini would be a great and good pope."

I will here note down what I heard at Rome nine years later from the mouth of a tool of the Jesuits. The Cardinal Tamburini was at the last gasp, and the conversation turned upon him, when somebody else said:

"This Benedictine cardinal is an impious fellow after all; he is on his death-bed, and he has asked for the viaticum, without wishing to purify his soul by confession."

I did not make any remark, but feeling as if I should like to know the truth of the matter I asked somebody about it next day, my informant being a person who must have known the truth, and could not have had any motive for disguising the real facts of the case. He told me that the cardinal had said mass three days before, and that if he had not asked for a confessor it was doubtless because he had nothing to confess. Unfortunate are they that love the truth, and do not seek it out at its source. I hope the reader will pardon this digression, which is not without interest.

Next day I went to see Cardinal Passionei, who told me I was quite right to come early, as he wanted to learn all about my escape from The Leads, of which he had heard some wonderful tales told.

"I shall be delighted to satisfy your eminence, but the story is a long one."

"All the better; they say you tell it well."

"But, my lord, am I to sit down on the floor?"

"No, no; your dress is too good for that."

He rang his bell, and having told one of his gentlemen to send up a seat, a servant brought in a stool. A seat without a back and without arms! It made me quite angry. I cut my story short, told it badly, and had finished in a quarter of an hour.

"I write better than you speak," said he.

"My lord, I never speak well except when I am at my ease."

"But you are not afraid of me?"

"No, my lord, a true man and a philosopher can never make me afraid; but this stool of yours . . ."

"You like to be at your ease, above all things.

"Take this, it is the funeral oration of Prince Eugène; I make you a present of it. I hope you will approve of my Latinity. You can kiss the Pope's feet to-morrow at ten o'clock."

When I got home, as I reflected on the character of this strange cardinal — a wit, haughty, vain, and boastful — I resolved to make him a fine present. It was the *Pandectarum liber unicus* which M. de F ** had given me at Berne, and which I did not know what to do with. It was a folio well printed on fine paper, choicely bound, and in perfect preservation. As chief librarian the present should be a valuable one to him, all the more as he had a large private library, of which my friend the Abbé Winckelmann was librarian. I therefore wrote a short Latin letter, which I enclosed in another to Winckelmann, whom I begged to present my offering to his eminence. I thought it was as valuable as his funeral oration at any rate, and I hoped that he would give me a more comfortable chair for the future.

Next morning, at the time appointed, I went to Monte Cavallo, which ought to be called Monte Cavalli, as it gets its name from two fine statues of horses standing on a pedestal in the midst of the square, where the Holy Father's palace is situated.

I had no real need of being presented to the Pope by anyone, as any Christian is at liberty to go in when he sees the door open. Besides I had known His Holiness when he was Bishop of Padua; but I had preferred to claim the honour of being introduced by a cardinal.

After saluting the Head of the Faithful, and kissing the holy cross embroidered on his holy slipper, the Pope put his right hand on my left shoulder, and said he remembered that I always forsook the assembly at Padua, when he intoned the Rosary.

"Holy Father, I have much worse sins than that on my conscience, so I come prostrate at your feet to receive your absolution."

He then gave me his benediction, and asked me very graciously what he could do for me.

"I beg Your Holiness to plead for me, that I may be able to return to Venice."

"We will speak of it to the ambassador, and then we will speak again to you on the matter. Do you often go and see Cardinal Passionei?"

"I have been three times. He gave me his funeral oration on Prince Eugène, and in return I sent him the *Pandects*."

"Has he accepted them?"

"I think so, Holy Father."

"If he has, he will send Winckelmann to pay you for them."

"That would be treating me like a bookseller; I will not receive any payment."

"Then he will return the volume of the *Pandects;* we are sure of it, he always does so."

"If his eminence returns me the *Pandects*, I will return him his funeral oration."

At this the Pope laughed till his sides shook.

"We shall be pleased to hear the end of the story without anyone being informed of our innocent curiosity."

With these words, a long benediction delivered with much unction informed me that my audience was at an end.

As I was leaving His Holiness's palace, I was accosted by an old abbé, who asked me respectfully if I were not the M. Casanova who had escaped from The Leads.

"Yes," said I, "I am the man."

"Heaven be praised, worthy sir, that I see you again in such good estate!"

"But whom have I the honour of addressing?"

"Don't you recollect me? I am Momolo, formerly gondolier at Venice."

"Have you entered holy orders, then?"

"Not at all, but here everyone wears the cassock. I am the first *scopatore* (sweeper) of His Holiness the Pope."

"I congratulate you on your appointment, but you mustn't mind me laughing."

"Laugh as much as you like. My wife and daughters laugh when I put on the cassock and bands, and I laugh myself, but here the dress gains one respect. Come and see us."

"Where do you live?"

"Behind the Trinity of Monti; here's my address."

"I will come to-night."

I went home delighted with this meeting, and determined to enjoy the evening with my Venetian boatman. I got my brother to come with me, and I told him how the Pope had received me.

The Abbé Winckelmann came in the afternoon and informed

me that I was fortunate enough to be high in favour with his cardinal, and that the book I had sent him was very valuable; it was a rare work, and in much better condition than the Vatican copy.

"I am commissioned to pay you for it."

"I have told his eminence that it was a present."

"He never accepts books as presents, and he wants yours for his own library; and as he is librarian of the Vatican Library he is afraid lest people might say unpleasant things."

"That's all very well, but I am not a bookseller; and as this book only cost me the trouble of accepting it, I am determined only to sell it at the same price. Pray ask the cardinal to honour me by accepting it."

"He is sure to send it back to you."

"He can if he likes, but I will send back his funeral oration, as I am not going to be under an obligation to anyone who refuses to take a present from me."

Next morning the eccentric cardinal returned me my *Pandects*, and I immediately returned his funeral oration, with a letter in which I pronounced it a masterpiece of composition, though I had barely glanced over it in reality. My brother told me I was wrong, but I did not trouble what he said, not caring to guide myself by his rulings.

In the evening my brother and I went to the *scopatore santissimo*, who was expecting me, and had announced me to his family as a prodigy of a man. I introduced my brother, and proceeded to a close scrutiny of the family. I saw an elderly woman, four girls, of whom the eldest was twenty-four, two small boys, and above all universal ugliness. It was not inviting for a man of voluptuous tastes, but I was there, and the best thing was to put a good face on it; so I stayed and enjoyed myself. Besides the general ugliness, the household presented the picture of misery, for the *scopatore santissimo* and his numerous family were obliged to live on two hundred Roman crowns a year, and as there are no perquisites attached to the office of apostolic sweeper, he was compelled to furnish all needs out of this slender sum. In spite of that Momolo was a most generous man. As soon as he saw me seated he told me he should have liked to give me a good supper, but there was only pork chops and a polenta.

"They are very nice," said I; "but will you allow me to send for half a dozen flasks of Orvieto from my lodging?"

"You are master here."

I wrote a note to Costa, telling him to bring the six flasks directly, with a cooked ham. He came in half an hour, and the four girls cried when they saw him, "What a fine fellow!" I saw Costa was delighted with this reception, and said to Momolo:

"If you like him as well as your girls I will let him stay."

Costa was charmed with such honour being shown him, and after thanking me went into the kitchen to help the mother with the polenta.

The large table was covered with a clean cloth, and soon after they brought in two huge dishes of polenta and an enormous pan full of chops. We were just going to begin when a knocking on the street door was heard.

"'Tis Signora Maria and her mother," said one of the boys.

At this announcement I saw the four girls pulling a wry face. 'Who asked them?" said one. "What do they want?" said another. "What troublesome people they are!" said a third. "They might have stayed at home," said the fourth. But the good, kindly father said, "My children, they are hungry, and they shall share what Providence has given us."

I was deeply touched with the worthy man's kindness. I saw that true Christian charity is more often to be found in the breasts of the poor than the rich, who are so well provided for that they cannot feel for the wants of others.

While I was making these wholesome reflections the two hungry ones came in. One was a young woman of a modest and pleasant aspect, and the other her mother, who seemed very humble and as if ashamed of their poverty. The daughter saluted the company with that natural grace which is a gift of nature, apologising in some confusion for her presence, and saying that she would not have taken the liberty to come if she had known there was company. The worthy Momolo was the only one who answered her, and he said, kindly, that she had done quite right to come, and put her a chair between my brother and myself. I looked at her and thought her a perfect beauty.

Then the eating began and there was no more talking. The polenta was excellent, the chops delicious, and the ham perfect, and in less than an hour the board was as bare as if there had

been nothing on it; but the Orvieto kept the company in good spirits. They began to talk of the lottery which was to be drawn the day after next, and all the girls mentioned the numbers on which they had risked a few bajocchi.

"If I could be sure of one number," said I, "I would stake something on it."

Mariuccia told me that if I wanted a number she could give me one. I laughed at this offer, but in the gravest way she named me the number 27.

"Is the lottery still open?" I asked the Abbé Momolo.

"Till midnight," he replied, "and if you like I will go and get the number for you."

"Here are fifty crowns," said I, "put twenty-five crowns on 27 — this for these five young ladies; and the other twenty-five on 27 coming out the fifth number, and this I will keep for myself."

He went out directly and returned with the two tickets.

My pretty neighbour thanked me and said she was sure of winning, but that she did not think I should succeed as it was not probable that 27 would come out fifth.

"I am sure of it," I answered, "for you are the fifth young lady I saw in this house." This made everybody laugh. Momolo's wife told me I would have done much better if I had given the money to the poor, but her husband told her to be quiet, as she did not know my intent. My brother laughed, and told me I had done a foolish thing. "I do, sometimes," said I, "but we shall see how it turns out, and when one plays one is obliged either to win or lose."

I managed to squeeze my fair neighbour's hand, and she returned the pressure with all her strength. From that time I knew my fate with Mariuccia was sealed. I left them at midnight, begging the worthy Momolo to ask me again in two days' time, that we might rejoice together over our gains. On our way home my brother said I had either become as rich as Crœsus or had gone mad. I told him that both suppositions were incorrect, that Mariuccia was as handsome as an angel, and he agreed.

Next day Mengs returned to Rome, and I supped with him and his family. He had an exceedingly ugly sister, who, for all that, was a good and talented woman. She had fallen deeply in love with my brother, and it was easy to see that the flame

was not yet extinguished, but whenever she spoke to him, which she did whenever she could get an opportunity, he looked another way.

She was an exquisite painter of miniatures, and a capital hand at catching a likeness. To the best of my belief she is still living at Rome with Maroni her husband. She often used to speak of my brother to me, and one day she said that he must be the most thankless of men or he would not despise her so. I was not curious enough to inquire what claim she had to his gratitude.

Mengs's wife was a good and pretty woman, attentive to her household duties and very submissive to her husband, though she could not have loved him, for he was anything but amiable. He was obstinate and fierce in his manner, and when he dined at home he made a point of not leaving the table before he was drunk; out of his own house he was temperate to the extent of not drinking anything but water. His wife carried her obedience so far as to serve as his model for all the nude figures he painted. I spoke to her one day about this unpleasant obligation, and she said that her confessor had charged her to fulfil it, "for," said he, "if your husband has another woman for model he will be sure to enjoy her before painting her, and that sin would be laid to your charge."

After supper, Winckelmann, who was as far gone as all the other male guests, played with Mengs's children. There was nothing of the pedant about this philosopher; he loved children and young people, and his cheerful disposition made him delight in all kinds of enjoyment.

Next day, as I was going to pay my court to the Pope, I saw Momolo in the first ante-chamber, and I took care to remind him of the polenta for the evening.

As soon as the Pope saw me, he said:

"The Venetian ambassador has informed us that if you wish to return to your native land, you must go and present yourself before the secretary of the Tribunal."

"Most Holy Father, I am quite ready to take this step, if Your Holiness will grant me a letter of commendation written with your own hand. Without this powerful protection I should never dream of exposing myself to the risk of being again shut up in a place from which I escaped by a miracle and the help of the Almighty."

"You are gaily dressed; you do not look as if you were going to church."

"True, most Holy Father, but neither am I going to a ball."

"We have heard all about the presents being sent back. Confess that you did so to gratify your pride."

"Yes, but also to lower a pride greater than mine."

The Pope smiled at this reply, and I knelt down and begged him to permit me to present the volume of *Pandects* to the Vatican Library. By way of reply he gave me his blessing, which signifies, in papal language, "Rise; your request is granted."

"We will send you," said he, "a mark of our *singular affection* for you without your having to pay any fees."

A second blessing bid me begone. I have often felt what a good thing it would be if this kind of dismissal could be employed in general society to send away importunate petitioners, to whom one does not dare say, "Go away!"

I was extremely curious to know what the Pope had meant by "a mark of our singular affection." I was afraid that it would be a blessed rosary, with which I should not have known what to do.

When I got home I sent the book by Costa to the Vatican, and then I went to dine with Mengs. While we were eating the soup the winning numbers from the lottery were brought in. My brother glanced at them and looked at me with astonishment. I was not thinking of the subject at that moment, and his gaze surprised me.

"Twenty-seven," he cried, "came out fifth."

"All the better," said I, "we shall have some amusement out of it."

I told the story to Mengs, who said:

"It's a lucky folly for you this time; but it always is a folly."

He was quite right, and I told him that I agreed with him; but I added that to make a worthy use of the fifteen hundred Roman crowns which fortune had given me I should go and spend fifteen days at Naples.

"I will come too," said the Abbé Alfani. "I will pass for your secretary."

"With all my heart," I answered, "I shall keep you to your word."

I asked Winckelmann to come and eat polenta with the *scopatore*

santissimo, and told my brother to show him the way; and I then called on the Marquis Belloni, my banker, to look into my accounts, and to get a letter of credit on the firm at Naples who were his agents. I still had two hundred thousand francs. I had jewellery worth thirty thousand francs, and fifty thousand florins at Amsterdam.

I got to Momolo's in the dusk of the evening, and I found Winckelmann and my brother already there; but instead of mirth reigning round the board I saw sad faces on all sides.

"What's the matter with the girls?" I asked Momolo.

"They are vexed that you did not stake for them in the same way as you did for yourself."

"People are never satisfied. If I had staked for them as I did for myself, and the number had come out first instead of fifth, they would have got nothing, and they would have been vexed then. Two days ago they had nothing, and now that they have twenty-seven crowns apiece they ought to be contented."

"That's just what I tell them, but all women are the same."

"And men, too, dear countryman, unless they are philosophers. Gold does not spell happiness, and mirth can only be found in hearts devoid of care. Let us say no more about it, but be happy."

Costa placed a basket containing ten packets of sweets upon the table.

"I will distribute them," said I, "when everybody is here."

On this, Momolo's second daughter told me that Mariuccia and her mother were not coming, but that they would send them the sweets.

"Why are they not coming?"

"They had a quarrel yesterday," said the father, "and Mariuccia, who was in the right, went away saying that she would never come here again."

"You ungrateful girls!" said I to my host's daughters, "don't you know that it is to her that you owe your winnings, for she gave me the number twenty-seven, which I should never have thought of. Quick! think of some way to make her come, or I will go away and take all the sweets with me."

"You are quite right," said Momolo.

The mortified girls looked at one another and begged their father to fetch her.

"No," said he, "that won't do; you made her say that she would never come here again, and you must make up the quarrel."

They held a short consultation, and then, asking Costa to go with them, they went to fetch her.

In half an hour they returned in triumph, and Costa was quite proud of the part he had taken in the reconciliation. I then distributed the sweets, taking care to give the two best packets to the fair Mary.

A noble polenta was placed upon the board, flanked by two large dishes of pork chops. But Momolo, who knew my tastes, and whom I had made rich in the person of his daughters, added to the feast some delicate dishes and some excellent wine. Mariuccia was simply dressed, but her elegance and beauty and the modesty of her demeanour completely seduced me.

We could only express our mutual flames by squeezing each other's hands; and she did this so feelingly that I could not doubt her love. As we were going out I took care to go downstairs beside her and asked if I could not meet her by herself, to which she replied by making an appointment with me for the next day at eight o'clock at the Trinity of Monti.

Mariuccia was tall and shapely, a perfect picture, as fair as a white rose, and calculated to inspire voluptuous desires. She had beautiful light brown hair, dark blue eyes, and exquisitely arched eyelids. Her mouth, the vermilion of her lips, and her ivory teeth were all perfect. Her well-shaped forehead gave her an air approaching the majestic. Kindness and gaiety sparkled in her eyes; while her plump white hands, her rounded fingertips, her pink nails, her breast, which the corset seemed scarcely able to restrain, her dainty feet, and her prominent hips, made her worthy of the chisel of Praxiteles. She was just on her eighteenth year, and so far had escaped the connoisseurs. By a lucky chance I came across her in a poor and wretched street, and I was fortunate enough to ensure her happiness.

It may easily be believed that I did not fail to keep the appointment, and when she was sure I had seen her she went out of the church. I followed her at a considerable distance: she entered a ruined building, and I after her. She climbed a flight of steps which seemed to be built in air, and when she had reached the top she turned.

"No one will come and look for me here," said she, "so we can talk freely together."

I sat beside her on a stone, and I then declared my passionate love for her.

"Tell me," I added, "what I can do to make you happy; for I wish to possess you, but first to show my deserts."

"Make me happy, and I will yield to your desires, for I love you."

"Tell me what I can do."

"You can draw me out of the poverty and misery which overwhelm me. I live with my mother, who is a good woman, but devout to the point of superstition; she will damn my soul in her efforts to save it. She finds fault with my keeping myself clean, because I have to touch myself when I wash, and that might give rise to evil desires. If you had given me the money you made me win in the lottery as a simple alms she would have made me refuse it, because you might have had intentions. She allows me to go by myself to mass because our confessor told her she might do so; but I dare not stay away a minute beyond the time, except on feast days, when I am allowed to pray in the church for two or three hours. We can only meet here, but if you wish to soften my lot in life you can do as follows:

"A fine young man, who is a hairdresser, and bears an excellent character, saw me at Momolo's a fortnight ago, and met me at the church door next day and gave me a letter. He declared himself my lover, and said that if I could bring him a dowry of four hundred crowns, he could open a shop, furnish it, and marry me.

"'I am poor,' I answered, 'and I have only a hundred crowns in charity tickets, which my confessor keeps for me.' Now I have two hundred crowns, for if I marry, my mother will willingly give me her share of the money you made us gain. You can therefore make me happy by getting me tickets to the amount of two hundred crowns more. Take the tickets to my confessor, who is a very good man and fond of me; he will not say anything to my mother about it."

"I needn't go about seeking for charity tickets, my angel. I will take two hundred piastres to your confessor to-morrow, and you must manage the rest yourself. Tell me his name, and to-morrow I will tell you what I have done, but not here, as the

wind and the cold would be the death of me. You can leave me to find out a room where we shall be at our ease, and without any danger of people suspecting that we have spent an hour together. I will meet you at the church to-morrow at the same hour, and when you see me follow me."

Mariuccia told me her confessor's name, and allowed me all the caresses possible in our uncomfortable position. The kisses she gave me in return for mine left no doubt in my mind as to her love for me. As nine o'clock struck I left her, perishing with cold, but burning with desire; my only thought being where to find a room in which I might possess myself of the treasure the next day.

On leaving the ruined palace, instead of returning to the Piazza di Spagna I turned to the left and passed along a narrow and dirty street only inhabited by people of the lowest sort. As I slowly walked along, a woman came out of her house and asked me politely if I were looking for anybody.

"I am looking for a room to let."

"There are none here, sir, but you will find a hundred in the square."

"I know it, but I want the room to be here, not for the sake of the expense, but that I may be sure of being able to spend an hour or so of a morning with a person in whom I am interested. I am ready to pay anything."

"I understand what you mean, and you should have a room in my house if I had one to spare, but a neighbour of mine has one on the ground-floor, and if you will wait a moment I will go and speak to her."

"You will oblige me very much."

"Kindly step in here."

I entered a poor room, where all seemed wretchedness, and I saw two children doing their lessons. Soon after, the good woman came back and asked me to follow her. I took several pieces of money from my pocket, and put them down on the only table which this poor place contained. I must have seemed very generous, for the poor mother came and kissed my hand with the utmost gratitude. So pleasant is it to do good, that now when I have nothing left the remembrance of the happiness I have given to others at small cost is almost the only pleasure I enjoy.

I went to a neighbouring house where a woman received me in an empty room, which she told me she would let cheaply if I would pay three months in advance, and bring in my own furniture.

"What do you ask for the three months' rent?"

"Three Roman crowns."

"If you will see to the furnishing of the room this very day I will give you twelve crowns."

"Twelve crowns! What furniture do you want?"

"A good clean bed, a small table covered with a clean cloth, four good chairs, and a large brazier with plenty of fire in it, for I am nearly perishing of cold here. I shall only come occasionally in the morning, and I shall leave by noon at the latest."

"Come at three o'clock, then, to-day, and you will find everything to your satisfaction."

From there I went to the confessor. He was a French monk, about sixty, a fine and benevolent-looking man, who won one's respect and confidence.

"Reverend father," I began, "I saw at the house of Abbé Momolo, *scopatore santissimo*, a young girl named Mary, whose confessor you are. I fell in love with her, and offered her money to try and seduce her. She replied that instead of trying to lead her into sin I would do better to get her some charity tickets that she might be able to marry a young man who loved her, and would make her happy. I was touched by what she said, but my passion still remained. I spoke to her again, and said that I would give her two hundred crowns for nothing, and that her mother should keep them.

"'That would be my ruin,' said she; 'my mother would think the money was the price of sin, and would not accept it. If you are really going to be so generous, take the money to my confessor, and ask him to do what he can for my marriage.'

"Here, then, reverend father, is the sum of money for the good girl; be kind enough to take charge of it, and I will trouble her no more. I am going to Naples the day after to-morrow, and I hope when I come back she will be married."

The good confessor took the hundred sequins and gave me a receipt, telling me that in interesting myself on behalf of Mariuccia I was making happy a most pure and innocent dove, whom he had confessed since she was five years old, and that he

had often told her that she might communicate without making her confession because he knew she was incapable of mortal sin.

"Her mother," he added, "is a sainted woman, and as soon as I have inquired into the character of the future husband I will soon bring the marriage about. No one shall ever know from whom this generous gift comes."

After putting this matter in order I dined with the Chevalier Mengs, and I willingly consented to go with the whole family to the Aliberti Theatre that evening. I did not forget, however, to go and inspect the room I had taken. I found all my orders executed, and I gave twelve crowns to the landlady and took the key, telling her to light the fire at seven every morning.

So impatient did I feel for the next day to come that I thought the opera detestable, and the night for me was a sleepless one.

Next morning I went to the church before the time, and when Mariuccia came, feeling sure that she had seen me, I went out. She followed me at a distance, and when I got to the door of the lodging I turned for her to be sure that it was I, and then went in and found the room well warmed. Soon after, Mariuccia came in, looking timid, confused, and as if she were doubtful of the path she was treading. I clasped her in my arms, and re-assured her by my tender embraces; and her courage rose when I showed her the confessor's receipt, and told her that the worthy man had promised to care for her marriage. She kissed my hand in a transport of delight, assuring me that she would never forget my kindness. Then, as I urged her to make me a happy man, she said:

"We have three hours before us, as I told my mother I was going to give thanks to God for having made me a winner in the lottery."

I had to go to Naples, but I assured her that the desire of embracing her once more before her marriage would hasten my return to Rome. I promised to take another hundred crowns to her confessor, advising her to spend the money she had won in the lottery on her trousseau.

"I shall be at Momolo's to-night, dearest, and you must come, too; but we must appear indifferent to each other, though our hearts be full of joy, lest those malicious girls suspect our mutual understanding."

"It is all the more necessary to be cautious," she replied, "as I have noticed that they suspect that we love each other."

Before we parted she thanked me for what I had done for her, and begged me to believe that, her poverty notwithstanding, she had given herself for love alone.

I was the last to leave the house, and I told my landlady that I should be away for ten or twelve days. I then went to the confessor to give him the hundred crowns I had promised my mistress. When the good old Frenchman heard that I had made this fresh sacrifice that Mariuccia might be able to spend her lottery winnings on her clothes, he told me that he would call on the mother that very day and urge her to consent to her daughter's marriage, and also learn where the young man lived. On my return from Naples I heard that he had faithfully carried out his promise.

I was sitting at table with Mengs when a chamberlain of the Holy Father called. When he came in he asked M. Mengs if I lived there, and on that gentleman pointing me out, he gave me, from his holy master, the cross of the Order of the Golden Spur with the diploma, and a patent under the pontifical seal, which, in my quality as doctor of laws, made me a prothonotary-apostolic *extra urbem.*

I felt that I had been highly honoured, and told the bearer that I would go and thank my new sovereign and ask his blessing the next day. The Chevalier Mengs embraced me as a brother, but I had the advantage over him in not being obliged to pay anything, whereas the great artist had to disburse twenty-five Roman crowns to have his diploma made out. There is a saying at Rome, *Sine effusione sanguinis non fit remissio,* which may be interpreted, *Nothing without money*; and as a matter of fact, one can do anything with money in the Holy City.

Feeling highly flattered at the favour the Holy Father had shown me, I put on the cross, which depended from a broad red ribbon — red being the colour worn by the Knights of St. John of the Lateran, the companions of the palace, *comites palatini,* or count-palatins. About the same time poor Cahusac, author of the opera of *Zoroaster,* went mad for joy on the receipt of the same order. I was not so bad as that, but I confess, to my shame, that I was so proud of the decoration that I asked Winckelmann whether I should be allowed to have the cross

set with diamonds and rubies. He said I could if I liked, and if I wanted such a cross he could get me one cheap. I was delighted, and bought it to make a show at Naples, but I had not the face to wear it in Rome. When I went to thank the Pope I wore the cross in my buttonhole out of modesty. Five years afterwards, when I was at Warsaw, Czartoryski, a Russian prince-palatine, made me leave it off by saying:

"What are you doing with that wretched bauble? It's a drug in the market, and no one but an impostor would wear it now."

The popes knew this quite well, but they continued to give the cross to ambassadors while they also gave it to their *valets de chambre*. One has to wink at a good many things in Rome.

In the evening Momolo gave me a supper by way of celebrating my new dignity. I recouped him for the expense by holding a bank at faro, at which I was dexterous enough to lose forty crowns to the family, without having the slightest partiality to Mariuccia, who won like the rest. She found the opportunity to tell me that her confessor had called on her, that she had told him where her future husband lived, and that the worthy monk had obtained her mother's consent to the hundred crowns being spent on her trousseau.

I noticed that Momolo's second daughter had taken a fancy to Costa, and I told Momolo that I was going to Naples, but that I would leave my man in Rome, and that if I found a marriage had been arranged on my return I would gladly pay the expenses of the wedding.

Costa liked the girl, but he did not marry her then for fear of my claiming the first-fruits. He was a fool of a peculiar kind, though fools of all sorts are common enough. He married her a year later after robbing me, but I shall speak of that again.

Next day, after I had breakfasted and duly embraced my brother, I set out in a nice carriage with the Abbé Alfani, Le Duc preceding me on horseback, and I reached Naples at a time when everybody was in a state of excitement because an eruption of Vesuvius seemed imminent. At the last stage the innkeeper made me read the will of his father, who had died during the eruption of 1754. He said that in the year 1761 God would overwhelm the sinful town of Naples, and the worthy host consequently advised me to return to Rome. Alfani took the thing seriously, and said that we should do well to be warned by so

evident an indication of the will of God. The event was predicted, therefore it had to happen. Thus a good many people reason, but as I was not of the number I proceeded on my way.

In Naples, where, as he often assures us, Fortune was ever kind to him, his paternal entrails receive another shock. This time it is the beautiful Leonilda, the honorary mistress of the Duke of Montalone, who, with the duke's approval, he nearly marries. But when he goes to call on the young lady's mother — oh, horror! oh, joy! — whom does he see? Lucrezia Castelli, the Neapolitan lawyer's handsome wife, and now his no less handsome widow, with whom in Rome, in Tivoli, in Frascati, he had tasted such unforgettable joys. Once more it is "just seventeen years ago," and once more he is more than willing to marry the mother and live happily with her for the rest of his days, if she will consent to take their daughter with them, for he cannot bear the thought of separating from his "Giacomina." But Lucrezia's first duty is towards her daughter, who being in the excellent hands of the elderly and impotent duke, must remain where she is. So the matter is dropped and Casanova, after settling a share of his winnings as dowry on his daughter, bids farewell to mother, daughter, and their generous protector.

Stopping in Rome, where the carnival has just begun, Casanova is the guest of honour at the marriage of Mariuccia (after, we need hardly say, the usual tenderly protracted farewell). Then, retracing his itinerary, with the obbligato *accompaniment of amorous exploits, he regains Paris, where his infatuated marquise is impatiently awaiting the promised accomplishment of her rejuvenation. There let us rejoin him.*

CHAPTER XIV

From Paris to Augsburg

AT TEN o'clock in the morning, cheered by the pleasant feeling of being once more in that Paris which is so imperfect, but which is the only true town in the world, I called on my dear Madame d'Urfé, who received me with open arms. She told me that the young Count d'Aranda was quite well, and if I liked she would ask him to dinner the next day. I told her I should be delighted to see him, and then I informed her that the operation by which she was to become a man could not

be performed till Querilinto, one of the three chiefs of the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross, was liberated from the dungeons of the Inquisition, at Lisbon.

"This is the reason," I added, "that I am going to Augsburg in the course of next month, where I shall confer with the Earl of Stormont as to the liberation of the adept, under the pretext of a mission from the Portuguese government. For these purposes I shall require a good letter of credit, and some watches and snuff-boxes to make presents with, as we have to win over certain of the profane."

"I will gladly see to all that, but you need not hurry yourself, as the Congress will not meet till September."

"Believe me, it will never meet at all, but the ambassadors of the belligerent powers will be there all the same. If, contrary to my expectation, the Congress is held, I shall be obliged to go to Lisbon. In any case, I promise to see you again in the ensuing winter. The fortnight that I have to spend here will enable me to defeat a plot of St. Germain's."

"St. Germain — he would never dare to return to Paris."

"I am certain that he is here in disguise. The state messenger who ordered him to leave London has convinced him the English minister was not duped by the demand for his person to be given up, made by the Comte d'Afri in the name of the king to the States-General."

All this was mere guesswork, and it will be seen that I guessed rightly.

Madame d'Urfé then congratulated me on the charming girl whom I had sent from Grenoble to Paris. Valenglard had told her the whole story.

"The king adores her," said she, "and before long she will make him a father. I have been to see her at Passi with the Duchesse de l'Oraguais."

"She will give birth to a son who will make France happy, and in thirty years' time you will see wondrous things, of which, unfortunately, I can tell you nothing until your transformation. Did you mention my name to her?"

"No, I did not; but I am sure you will be able to see her, if only at Madame Varnier's."

She was not mistaken; but shortly afterwards an event happened which made the madness of this excellent woman much

worse. Towards four o'clock, as we were talking over my travels and our designs, she took a fancy to walk in the Bois du Boulogne. She begged me to accompany her, and I acceded to her request. We walked into the deepest recesses of the wood and sat down under a tree.

"It is eighteen years," said she, "since I fell asleep on the same spot that we now occupy. During my sleep the divine Horosmadis came down from the sun and stayed with me till I awoke. As I opened my eyes I saw him leave me and ascend to heaven. He left me with child, and I bore a girl which he took away from me ten years ago, no doubt to punish me for having so far forgotten myself as to love a mortal after him. My lovely Iriasis was like him."

"You are quite sure that M. d'Urfé was not the child's father?"

"M. d'Urfé did not know me after he saw me lying beside the divine Anael."

"That's the genius of Venus."

"He too left me on account of my sinning with an Arab."

"The Arab was sent to you by an enemy of Anael's, the genius of Mercury."

"It must have been so; it was a great misfortune."

"On the contrary, it rendered you more fit for transformation."

We were walking towards the carriage when all at once we saw St. Germain, but as soon as he noticed us he turned back and we lost sight of him.

"Did you see him?" said I. "He is working against us, but our genie makes him tremble."

"I am quite thunderstruck. I will go and impart this piece of news to the Duc de Choiseul to-morrow morning. I am curious to hear what he will say when I tell him."

As we were going back to Paris I left Madame d'Urfé, and walked to the Porte St. Denis to see my brother. He and his wife received me with cries of joy. I thought the wife very pretty but very wretched, for Providence had not allowed my brother to prove his manhood, and she was unhappily in love with him. I say unhappily, because her love kept her faithful to him, and if she had not been in love she might easily have found a cure for her misfortune, as her husband allowed her

perfect liberty. She grieved bitterly, for she did not know that my brother was impotent, and fancied that the reason of his abstention was that he did not return her love; and the mistake was an excusable one, for he was like a Hercules, and indeed he was one, except where it was most to be desired. Her grief threw her into a consumption of which she died five or six years later. She did not mean her death to be a punishment to her husband, but we shall see that it was so.

The next day I called on Madame Varnier to give her Madame Morin's letter. I was cordially welcomed, and Madame Varnier was kind enough to say that she had rather see me than anybody else in the world; her niece had told her such strange things about me that she had got quite curious. This, as is well known, is a prevailing complaint with women.

"You shall see my niece," she said, "and she will tell you all about herself."

She wrote her a note, and put Madame Morin's letter under the same envelope.

"If you want to know what my niece's answer is," said Madame Varnier, "you must dine with me."

I accepted the invitation, and she immediately told her servant that she was not at home to anyone.

The small messenger who had taken the note to Passi returned at four o'clock with the following epistle:

"The moment in which I see the Chevalier de Seingalt once more will be one of the happiest of my life. Ask him to be at your house at ten o'clock the day after to-morrow, and if he can't come then, please let me know."

After reading the note and promising to keep the appointment, I left Madame Varnier and called on Madame de Rumain, who told me I must spend a whole day with her as she had several questions to put to my oracle.

Next day Madame d'Urfé told me the reply she had from the Duc de Choiseul, when she told him that she had seen the Comte de St. Germain in the Bois du Boulogne.

"I should not be surprised," said the minister, "considering that he spent the night in my closet."

The duke was a man of wit and a man of the world. He only kept secrets when they were really important ones; very different from those make-believe diplomatists, who think they give

themselves importance by making a mystery of trifles of no consequence. It is true that the Duc de Choiseul very seldom thought anything of great importance; and, in point of fact, if there were less intrigue and more truth about diplomacy (as there ought to be), concealment would be rather ridiculous than necessary.

The duke had pretended to disgrace St. Germain in France that he might use him as a spy in London; but Lord Halifax was by no means taken in by this stratagem. However, all governments have the politeness to afford one another these services, so that none of them can reproach the others.

The small Comte d'Aranda after caressing me affectionately begged me to come and breakfast with him at his boarding-house, telling me that Mdlle. Viar would be glad to see me.

The next day I took care not to fail in my appointment with the fair lady. I was at Madame Varnier's a quarter of an hour before the arrival of the dazzling brunette, and I waited for her with a beating at the heart which showed me that the small favours she had given me had not quenched the flame of love. When she made her appearance the stoutness of her figure carried respect with it, so that I did not feel as if I could come forward and greet her tenderly; but she was far from thinking that more respect was due to her than when she was at Grenoble, poor but also pure. She kissed me affectionately and told me as much.

"They think I am happy," said she, "and envy my lot; but can one be happy after the loss of one's self-respect? For the last six months I have only smiled, not laughed; while at Grenoble I laughed heartily from true gladness. I have diamonds, lace, a beautiful house, a superb carriage, a lovely garden, waiting-maids, and a maid of honour who perhaps despises me; and although the highest Court ladies treat me like a princess, I do not pass a single day without experiencing some mortification."

"Mortification?"

"Yes; people come and bring pleas before me, and I am obliged to send them away as I dare not ask the king anything."

"Why not?"

"Because I cannot look on him as my lover only; he is always my sovereign, too. Ah! happiness is to be sought for in simple homes, not in pompous palaces."

"Happiness is gained by complying with the duties of whatever condition of life one is in, and you must constrain yourself to rise to that exalted station in which destiny has placed you."

"I cannot do it; I love the king and I am always afraid of vexing him. I am always thinking that he does too much for me, and thus I dare not ask for anything for others."

"But I am sure the king would be only too glad to show his love for you by benefiting the persons in whom you take an interest."

"I know he would, and that thought makes me happy, but I cannot overcome my feeling of repugnance to asking favours. I have a hundred louis a month for pin-money, and I distribute it in alms and presents, but with due economy, so that I am not penniless at the end of the month. I have a foolish notion that the chief reason the king loves me is that I do not importune him."

"And do you love him?"

"How can I help it? He is good-hearted, kindly, handsome, and polite to excess; in short, he possesses all the qualities to captivate a woman's heart.

"He is always asking me if I am pleased with my furniture, my clothes, my servants, and my garden, and if I desire anything altered. I thank him with a kiss, and tell him that I am pleased with everything."

"Does he ever speak of the scion you are going to present to him?"

"He often says that I ought to be careful of myself in my situation. I am hoping that he will recognise my son as a prince of the blood; he ought in justice to do so, as the queen is dead."

"To be sure he will."

"I should be very happy if I had a son. I wish I felt sure that I would have one. But I say nothing about this to anyone. If I dared speak to the king about the horoscope, I am certain he would want to know you; but I am afraid of evil tongues."

"So am I. Continue in your discreet course and nothing will come to disturb your happiness, which may become greater, and which I am pleased to have procured for you."

We did not part without tears. She was the first to go, after kissing me and calling me her best friend. I stayed a short time

with Madame Varnier to compose my feelings, and I told her that I should have married her instead of drawing her horoscope.

"She would no doubt have been happier. You did not foresee, perhaps, her timidity and her lack of ambition."

"I can assure you that I did not reckon upon her courage or ambition. I laid aside my own happiness to think only of hers. But what is done cannot be recalled, and I shall be consoled if I see her perfectly happy at last. I hope, indeed, she will be so, above all if she is delivered of a son."

I dined with Madame d'Urfé, and we decided to send back Aranda to his boarding-school that we might be more free to pursue our cabalistic operations; and afterwards I went to the opera, where my brother had made an appointment with me. He took me to sup at Madame Vanloo's, and she received me in the friendliest manner possible.

"You will have the pleasure of meeting Madame Blondel and her husband," said she.

The reader will recollect that Madame Blondel was Manon Baletti, whom I was to have married.

"Does she know I am coming?" I inquired.

"No, I promise myself the pleasure of seeing her surprise."

"I am much obliged to you for not wishing to enjoy my surprise as well. We shall see each other again, but not to-day, so I must bid you farewell; for as I am a man of honour I hope never to be under the same roof as Madame Blondel again."

With this I left the room, leaving everybody in astonishment, and not knowing where to go I took a coach and went to sup with my sister-in-law, who was extremely glad to see me. But all through supper-time this charming woman did nothing but complain of her husband, saying that he had no business to marry her, knowing that he could not show himself a man.

"Why did you not make the trial before you married?"

"Was it for me to propose such a thing? How should I suppose that such a fine man was impotent? But I will tell you how it all happened. As you know, I was a dancer at the Comédie Italienne, and I was the mistress of M. de Sauci, the ecclesiastical commissioner. He brought your brother to my house, I liked him, and before long I saw that he loved me. My lover advised me that it was an opportunity for getting married and making my fortune. With this idea I conceived

the plan of not granting him any favours. He used to come and see me in the morning, and often found me in bed; we talked together, and his passions seemed to be aroused, but it all ended in kissing. On my part, I was waiting for a formal declaration and a proposal of marriage. At that period, M. de Sauci settled an annuity of a thousand crowns on me on the condition that I left the stage.

"In the spring M. de Sauci invited your brother to spend a month in his country-house. I was of the party, but for propriety's sake it was agreed that I should pass as your brother's wife. Casanova enjoyed the idea, looking upon it as a jest, and not thinking of the consequences. I was therefore introduced as his wife to my lover's family, as also to his relations, who were judges, officers, and men about town, and to their wives, who were all women of fashion. Your brother was in high glee that to play our parts properly we were obliged to sleep together. For my part, I was far from disliking the idea, or at all events I looked upon it as a short cut to the marriage I desired.

"But how can I tell you? Though tender and affectionate in everything, your brother slept with me for a month without our attaining what seemed the natural result under the circumstances."

"You might have concluded, then, that he was impotent; for unless he were made of stone, or had taken a vow of chastity, his conduct was inexplicable."

"The fact is, that I had no means of knowing whether he was capable or incapable of giving me substantial proof of his love."

"Why did you not ascertain his condition for yourself?"

"A feeling of foolish pride prevented me from putting him to the test. I did not suspect the truth, but imagined reasons flattering to myself. I thought that he loved me so truly that he would not do anything before I was his wife. That idea prevented me humiliating myself by making him give me some positive proof of his powers."

"That supposition would have been tenable, though highly improbable, if you had been an innocent young maid, but he knew perfectly well that your novitiate was long over."

"Very true; but what can you expect of a woman impelled by love and vanity?"

"Your reasoning is excellent, but it comes rather late."

"Well, at last we went back to Paris, your brother to his house, and I to mine, while he continued his courtship, and I could not understand what he meant by such strange behaviour. M. de Sauci, who knew that nothing serious had taken place between us, tried in vain to solve the enigma. 'No doubt he is afraid of getting you with child,' he said, 'and of thus being obliged to marry you.' I began to be of the same opinion, but I thought it a strange line for a man in love to take.

"M. de Nesle, an officer in the French Guards, who had a pretty wife I had met in the country, went to your brother's to call on me. Not finding me there he asked why we did not live together. Your brother replied openly that our marriage had been a mere jest. M. de Nesle then came to me to inquire if this were the truth, and when he heard that it was he asked me how I would like him to make Casanova marry me. I answered that I should be delighted, and that was enough for him. He went again to your brother, and told him that his wife would never have associated with me on equal terms if I had not been introduced to her as a married woman; that the deceit was an insult to all the company at the country-house, which must be wiped out by his marrying me within the week or by fighting a duel. M. de Nesle added that if he fell he would be avenged by all the gentlemen who had been offended in the same way. Casanova replied, laughing, that so far from fighting to escape marrying me, he was ready to break a lance to get me. 'I love her,' he said, 'and if she loves me I am quite ready to give her my hand. Be kind enough,' he added, 'to prepare the way for me, and I will marry her whenever you like.'

"M. de Nesle embraced him, and promised to see to everything; he brought me the joyful news, and in a week all was over. M. de Nesle gave us a splendid supper on our wedding-day, and since then I have had the title of his wife. It is an empty title, however, for, despite the ceremony and the fatal yes, I am no wife, for your brother is completely impotent. I am an unhappy wretch, and it is all his fault, for he ought to have known his own condition. He has deceived me horribly."

"But he was obliged to act as he did; he is more to be pitied than to be blamed. I also pity you, but I think you are in the wrong, for after his sleeping with you for a month without

giving any proof of his manhood you might have guessed the truth. Even if you had been a perfect novice, M. de Sauci ought to have known what was the matter."

"All that seems very reasonable, but nevertheless neither of us thought of it; your brother looks such a Hercules."

"There are two remedies open to you; you can either have your marriage annulled, or you can take a lover; and I am sure that my brother is too reasonable a man to offer any opposition to the latter course."

"I am perfectly free, but I can neither avail myself of a divorce nor of a lover; for the wretch treats me so kindly that I love him more and more, which doubtless makes my misfortune harder to bear."

The poor woman was so unhappy that I should have been delighted to console her, but it was out of the question. However, the mere telling of her story had afforded her some solace, and after kissing her in such a way as to convince her that I was not like my brother, I wished her good-night.

The next day I called on Madame Vanloo, who informed me that Madame Blondel had charged her to thank me for having gone away, while her husband wished me to know that he was sorry not to have seen me to express his gratitude.

"He seems to have found his wife a maid, but that's no fault of mine; and Manon Baletti is the only person he ought to be grateful to. They tell me that he has a pretty baby, and that he lives at the Louvre, while she has another house in the Rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs."

"Yes, but he has supper with her every evening."

"It's an odd way of living."

"I assure you it answers capitally. Blondel regards his wife as his mistress. He says that that keeps the flame of love alight, and that as he never had a mistress worthy of being a wife, he is delighted to have a wife worthy of being a mistress."

The next day I devoted entirely to Madame de Rumain, and we were occupied with knotty questions till the evening. I left her well pleased. The marriage of her daughter, Mdlle. Cotenfau, with M. de Polignac, which took place five or six years later, was the result of our cabalistic calculations.

The fair stocking-seller of the Rue des Prouvères, whom I had loved so well, was no longer in Paris. She had gone off with

a M. de Langlade, and her husband was inconsolable. Camille was ill. Coralline had become the titulary mistress of the Comte de la Marche, son of the Prince of Conti, and the issue of this union was a son, whom I knew twenty years later. He called himself the Chevalier de Montréal and wore the cross of the Knights of Malta. Several other girls I had known were widowed and in the country, or had become inaccessible in other ways.

Such was the Paris of my day. The actors on its stage changed as rapidly as the fashions.

I devoted a whole day to my old friend Baletti, who had left the theatre and married a pretty ballet-girl on the death of his father; he was making experiments with a view to finding the philosopher's stone.

I was agreeably surprised at meeting the poet Poinsinet at the Comédie Française. He embraced me again and again, and told me that M. du Tillot had overwhelmed him with kindness at Parma.

"He could not get me anything to do," said Poinsinet, "because a French poet is rather at a discount in Italy."

"Have you heard anything of Lord Lismore?"

"Yes, he wrote to his mother from Leghorn, telling her that he was going to the Indies, and that if you had not been good enough to give him a thousand louis he would have been a prisoner at Rome."

"His fate interests me extremely, and I should be glad to call on his lady-mother with you."

"I will tell her that you are in Paris, and I am sure that she will invite you to supper, for she has the greatest desire to talk to you."

"How are you getting on here? Are you still content to serve Apollo?"

"He is not the god of wealth by any means. I have no money and no room, and I shall be glad of a supper, if you will ask me. I will read you my play, the *Cercle*, which has been accepted. I am sure it will be successful."

The *Cercle* was a short prose play, in which the poet satirised the jargon of Dr. Herrenschwand, brother of the doctor I had consulted at Soleure. The play proved to be a great success.

I took Poinsinet home to supper, and the poor nursling of

the muses ate for four. In the morning he came to tell me that the Countess of Lismore expected me to supper.

I found the lady, still pretty, in company with her aged lover, M. de St. Albin, Archbishop of Cambrai, who spent all the revenues of his see on her. This worthy prelate was one of the illegitimate children of the Duc d'Orléans, the famous Regent, by an actress. He supped with us, but he only opened his mouth to eat, and his mistress only spoke of her son, whose talents she lauded to the skies, though he was in reality a mere scamp; but I felt in duty bound to echo what she said. It would have been cruel to contradict her. I promised to let her know if I saw anything more of him.

Poinsinet, who was hearthless and homeless, as they say, spent the night in my room, and in the morning I gave him two cups of chocolate and some money wherewith to get a lodging. I never saw him again, and a few years after he was drowned, not in the fountain Hippocrene, but in the Guadalquivir. He told me that he had spent a week with M. de Voltaire, and that he had hastened his return to Paris to obtain the release of the Abbé Morellet from the Bastille.

I had nothing more to do at Paris, and I was only waiting for some clothes to be made and for a cross of the order with which the Holy Father had decorated me, to be set with diamonds and rubies.

I had waited for five or six days when an unfortunate incident obliged me to take a hasty departure. I am loth to write what follows, for it was all my own fault that I was nearly losing my life and my honour. I pity those simpletons who blame fortune and not themselves for their misfortunes.

I was walking in the Tuileries at ten o'clock in the morning, when I was unlucky enough to meet the Dangenancour and another girl. This Dangenancour was a dancer at the opera-house, whom I had desired to meet previously to my last departure from Paris. I congratulated myself on the lucky chance which threw her in my way, and accosted her, and had not much trouble in inducing her to dine with me at Choisi.

We walked towards the Pont-Royal, where we took a coach. After dinner had been ordered we were taking a turn in the garden, when I saw a carriage stop and two adventurers whom I knew getting out of it, with two girls, friends of the ones I

had with me. The wretched landlady, who was standing at the door, said that if we liked to sit down together she could give us an excellent dinner, and I said nothing, or rather I assented to the yes of my two nymphs. The dinner was excellent, and after the bill was paid, and we were on the point of returning to Paris, I noticed that a ring, which I had taken off to show to one of the adventurers, named Santis, was still missing. It was an exceedingly pretty minature, and the diamond setting had cost me twenty-five louis. I politely begged Santis to return me the ring, and he replied with the utmost coolness that he had done so already.

"If you had returned it," said I, "it would be on my finger, and you see that it is not."

He persisted in his assertion; the girls said nothing, but Santis's friend, a Portuguese, named Xavier, dared to tell me that he had seen the ring returned.

"You're a liar," I exclaimed; and without more ado I took hold of Santis by the collar, and swore I would not let him go till he returned me my ring. The Portuguese rose to come to his friend's rescue, while I stepped back and drew my sword, repeating my determination not to let them go. The landlady came on the scene and began to shriek, and Santis asked me to give him a few words apart. I thought in all good faith that he was ashamed to restore the ring before company, but that he would give it me as soon as we were alone. I sheathed my sword, and told him to come with me. Xavier got into the carriage with the four girls, and they all went back to Paris.

Santis followed me to the back of the inn, and then assuming a pleasant smile he told me that he had put the ring into his friend's pocket for a joke, but that I should have it back at Paris.

"That's an idle tale," I exclaimed, "your friend said that he saw you return it, and now he has escaped me. Do you think that I am green enough to be taken in by this sort of thing? You're a couple of robbers."

So saying, I stretched out my hand for his watch-chain, but he stepped back and drew his sword. I drew mine, and we had scarcely crossed swords when he thrust, and I parrying rushed in and ran him through and through. He fell to the ground calling, "Help!" I sheathed my sword, and, without

troubling myself about him, got into my coach and drove back to Paris.

I got down in the Place Maubert, and walked by a circuitous way to my hotel. I was sure that no one could have come after me there, as my landlord did not even know my name.

I spent the rest of the day in packing up my trunks, and after telling Costa to place them on my carriage I went to Madame d'Urfé. After I had told her of what had happened, I begged her, as soon as that which she had for me was ready, to send it to me at Augsburg by Costa. I should have told her to entrust it to one of her own servants, but my good genius had left me that day. Besides, I did not look upon Costa as a thief.

When I got back to the hotel I gave the rascal his instructions, telling him to be quick and to keep his own counsel, and I then gave him money for the journey.

I left Paris in my carriage, drawn by four hired horses, which took me as far as the second post, and I did not stop till I got to Strasburg, where I found Desarmoises and my Spaniard.

There was nothing to keep me in Strasburg, so I wanted to cross the Rhine immediately; but Desarmoises persuaded me to come with him to see an extremely pretty woman who had only delayed her departure for Augsburg in the hope that we might journey there together.

"You know the lady," said the false marquis, "but she made me give my word of honour that I would not tell you. She has only her maid with her, and I am sure you will be pleased to see her."

My curiosity made me give in. I followed Desarmoises, and came into a room where I saw a nice-looking woman whom I did not recognise at first. I collected my thoughts, and the lady turned out to be a dancer whom I had admired on the Dresden boards eight years before. She was then mistress to Count Brühl, but I had not even attempted to win her favour. She had an excellent carriage, and as she was ready to go to Augsburg I immediately concluded that we could make the journey together very pleasantly.

After the usual compliments had passed, we decided on leaving for Augsburg the following morning. The lady was going to Munich, but as I had no business there we agreed that she should go by herself.

"I am quite sure," she said, afterwards, "that you will come too, for the ambassadors do not assemble at Augsburg till next September."

We supped together, and next morning we started on our way; she in her carriage with her maid, and I in mine with Desarmoises, preceded by Le Duc on horseback. At Rastadt, however, we made a change, the Renaud (as she was called) thinking that she would give less opportunity for curious surmises by riding with me, while Desarmoises went with the servant. We soon became intimate. She told me about herself, or pretended to, and I told her all that I did not want to conceal. I informed her that I was an agent of the Court of Lisbon, and she believed me, while, for my part, I believed that she was only going to Munich and Augsburg to sell her diamonds.

We began to talk about Desarmoises, and she said that it was well enough for me to associate with him, but I should not countenance his styling himself marquis.

"But," said I, "he is the son of the Marquis Desarmoises, of Nancy."

"No, he isn't; he is only a retired messenger, with a small pension from the department of foreign affairs. I know the Marquis Desarmoises; he lives at Nancy, and is not so old as our friend."

"Then one can't see how he can be Desarmoises's father."

"The landlord of the inn at Strasburg knew him when he was a messenger."

"How did you make his acquaintance?"

"We met at the table d'hôte. After dinner he came up to my room, and told me he was waiting for a gentleman who was going to Augsburg, and that we might make the journey together. He told me the name, and after questioning him I concluded that the gentleman was yourself, so here we are, and I am very glad of it. But listen to me; I advise you to drop all false styles and titles. Why do you call yourself Seingalt?"

"Because it's my name, but that doesn't prevent my old friends calling me Casanova, for I am both. You understand?"

"Oh, yes! I understand. Your mother is at Prague, and as she doesn't get her pension on account of the war, I am afraid she must be rather in difficulties."

"I know it, but I do not forget my filial duties. I have sent her some money."

"That's right. Where are you going to stay at Augsburg?"

"I shall take a house, and if you like you shall be the mistress and do the honours."

"That would be delightful! We will give little suppers, and play cards all night."

"Your programme is an excellent one."

"I will see that you get a good cook; all the Bavarian cooks are good. We shall cut a fine figure, and people will say we love each other madly."

"You must know, dearest, that I do not understand jokes at the expense of fidelity."

"You may trust me for that. You know how I lived at Dresden."

"I will trust you, but not blindly, I promise you. And now let us address each other in the same way; you must call me *tu*. You must remember we are lovers."

"Kiss me!"

The fair Renaud did not like travelling by night; she preferred to eat a good supper, to drink heavily, and to go to bed just as her head began to whirl. The heat of the wine made her into a Bacchante, hard to appease; but when I could do no more I told her to leave me alone, and she had to obey.

When we reached Augsburg we alighted at the Three Moors, but the landlord told us that though he could give us a good dinner he could not put us up, as the whole of the hotel had been engaged by the French ambassador. I called on M. Corti, the banker to whom I was accredited, and he soon got me a furnished house with a garden, which I took for six months. The Renaud liked it immensely.

No one had yet arrived at Augsburg. The Renaud contrived to make me feel that I should be lonely at Augsburg without her, and succeeded in persuading me to come with her to Munich. We put up at the Stag, and made ourselves very comfortable, while Desarmoises went to stay somewhere else. As my business and that of my new mate had nothing in common, I gave her a servant and a carriage to herself, and made myself the same allowance.

The Abbé Gama had given me a letter from the Commendatore Almada for Lord Stormont, the English ambassador at the Court of Bavaria. This nobleman being then at Munich I

hastened to deliver the letter. He received me very well, and promised to do all he could as soon as he had time, as Lord Halifax had told him all about it. On leaving his Britannic lordship's I called on M. de Folard, the French ambassador, and gave him a letter from M. de Choiseul. M. de Folard gave me a hearty welcome, and asked me to dine with him the next day, and the day after introduced me to the Elector.

During the four fatal weeks I spent at Munich, the ambassador's house was the only one I frequented. I call these weeks fatal, and with reason, for in them I lost all my money, I pledged jewels (which I never recovered) to the amount of forty thousand francs, and finally I lost my health. My assassins were the Renaud and Desarmoises, who owed me so much and paid me so badly.

The third day after my arrival I had to call on the Dowager Electress of Saxony. It was my brother-in-law, who was in her train, that made me go, by telling me that it must be done, as she knew me and had been inquiring for me. I had no reason to repent of my politeness in going, as the Electress gave me a good reception, and made me talk to any extent. She was extremely curious, like most people who have no employment, and have not sufficient intelligence to amuse themselves.

I have done a good many foolish things in the course of my existence. I confess it as frankly as Rousseau, and my Memoirs are not so egotistic as those of that unfortunate genius; but I never committed such an act of folly as I did when I went to Munich, where I had nothing to do. But it was a crisis in my life. My evil genius had made me commit one folly after another since I left Turin. The evening at Lord Lismore's, my connection with Desarmoises, my party at Choisi, my trust in Costa, my union with the Renaud, and, worse than all, my folly in letting myself play at faro at a place where the knavery of the gamesters is renowned all over Europe, followed one another in fatal succession. Among the players was the famous, or rather infamous, Afflisio, the friend of the Duc de Deux-Ponts, whom the duke called his aide-de-camp, and who was known for the keenest rogue in the world.

I played every day, and as I often lost money on my word of honour, the necessity of paying the next day often caused me the utmost anxiety. When I had exhausted my credit with the

bankers, I had recourse to the Jews who require pledges, and in this Desarmoises and the Renaud were my agents, the latter of whom ended by making herself mistress of all my property. This was not the worst thing she did to me; for she gave me a disease which devoured her interior parts and left no marks outwardly, and was thus all the more dangerous, as the freshness of her complexion seemed to indicate the most perfect health. In short, this serpent, who must have come from hell to destroy me, had acquired such a mastery over me that she persuaded me that she would be dishonoured if I called in a doctor during our stay at Munich, as everybody knew that we were living together as man and wife.

I cannot imagine what had become of my wits to let myself be so beguiled, while every day I renewed the poison that she had poured into my veins.

My stay at Munich was a kind of curse; throughout that dreadful month I seemed to have a foretaste of the pains of the damned. The Renaud loved gaming, and Desarmoises was her partner. I took care not to play with them, for the false marquis was an unmitigated cheat and often tricked with less skill than impudence. He asked disreputable people to my house and treated them at my expense; every evening scenes of a disgraceful character took place.

The Dowager Electress mortified me extremely by the way she addressed me on my last two visits to her.

"Everybody knows what kind of a life you lead here, and the way the Renaud behaves, possibly without your knowing it. I advise you to have done with her, as your character is suffering."

She did not know what a thraldom I was under. I had left Paris for a month, and I had neither heard of Madame d'Urfé nor of Costa. I could not guess the reason, but I began to suspect my Italian's fidelity. I also feared lest my good Madame d'Urfé might be dead or have come to her senses, which would have come to the same thing so far as I was concerned; and I could not possibly return to Paris to obtain the information which was so necessary both for calming my mind and refilling my purse.

I was in a terrible state, and my sharpest pang was that I began to experience a certain abatement of my vigour, the natural result of advancing years. I had no longer that daring born of youth and the knowledge of one's strength, and I was

not yet old enough to have learnt how to husband my forces. Nevertheless, I made an effort and took a sudden leave of my mistress, telling her I would await her at Augsburg. She did not try to detain me, but promised to rejoin me as soon as possible; she was engaged in selling her jewellery. I set out preceded by Le Duc, feeling very glad that Desarmoises had chosen to stay with the wretched woman to whom he had introduced me. When I reached my pretty house at Augsburg I took to my bed, determined not to rise till I was cured or dead. M. Carli, my banker, recommended to me a doctor named Cephalides, a pupil of the famous Fayet, who had cured me of a similar complaint several years before. This Cephalides was considered the best doctor in Augsburg. He examined me and declared he could cure me by sudorifics without having recourse to the knife. He began his treatment by putting me on a severe regimen, ordering baths, and applying mercury locally. I endured this treatment for six weeks, at the end of which time I found myself worse than at the beginning. I had become terribly thin, and I had two enormous inguinal tumours. I had to make up my mind to have them lanced, but though the operation nearly killed me it did not make me any better. He was so clumsy as to cut the artery, causing great loss of blood which was arrested with difficulty, and would have proved fatal if it had not been for the care of M. Algardi, a Bolognese doctor in the service of the Prince-Bishop of Augsburg.

I had had enough of Cephalides, and Dr. Algardi prepared in my presence eighty-six pills containing eighteen grains of manna. I took one of these pills every morning, drinking a large glass of curds after it, and in the evening I had another pill with barley water, and this was the only sustenance I had. This heroic treatment gave me back my health in two months and a half, in which I suffered a great deal of pain; but I did not begin to put on flesh and get back my strength till the end of the year.

It was during this time that I heard about Costa's flight with my diamonds, watches, snuff-box, linen, rich suits, and a hundred louis which Madame d'Urfé had given him for the journey. The worthy lady sent me a bill of exchange for fifty thousand francs, which she had happily not entrusted to the robber, and the money rescued me very opportunely from the state to which my imprudence had reduced me.

At this period I made another discovery of an extremely vexatious character; namely, that Le Duc had robbed me. I would have forgiven him if he had not forced me to a public exposure, which I could only have avoided with the loss of my honour. However, I kept him in my service till my return to Paris at the commencement of the following year.

Towards the end of September, when everybody knew that the Congress would not take place, the Renaud passed through Augsburg with Desarmoises on her way to Paris; but she dared not come and see me for fear I should make her return my goods, of which she had taken possession without telling me. Four or five years later she married a man named Böhmer, the same that gave the Cardinal de Rohan the famous necklace, which he supposed was destined for the unfortunate Marie Antoinette. The Renaud was at Paris when I returned, but I made no endeavour to see her, as I wished, if possible, to forget the past. I had every reason to do so, for amongst all the misfortunes I had gone through during that wretched year the person I found most at fault was myself. Nevertheless, I would have given myself the pleasure of cutting off Desarmoises's ears; but the old rascal, who, no doubt, foresaw what kind of treatment I was likely to mete to him, made his escape. Shortly after, he died miserably of consumption in Normandy.

My health had scarcely returned, when I forgot all my woes and began once more to amuse myself. My excellent cook, Anna Midel, who had been idle so long, had to work hard to satisfy my ravenous appetite. My landlord and pretty Gertrude, his daughter, looked at me with astonishment as I ate, fearing some disastrous results. Dr. Algardi, who had saved my life, prophesied a dyspepsia which would bring me to the tomb, but my need of food was stronger than his arguments, to which I paid no kind of attention; and I was right, for I required an immense quantity of nourishment to recover my former state, and I soon felt in a condition to renew my sacrifices to the deity for whom I had suffered so much.

I fell in love with the cook and Gertrude, who were both young and pretty. I imparted my love to both of them at once, for I had foreseen that if I attacked them separately I should conquer neither. Besides, I felt that I had not much time to lose, as I had promised to sup with Madame d'Urfé on the first

night of the year 1761 in a suite of rooms she had furnished for me in the Rue du Bacq. She had adorned the rooms with superb tapestry made for Réné of Savoy, on which were depicted all the operations of the Great Work. She wrote to me that she had heard that Santis had recovered from the wound I had given him, and had been committed to the Bicêtre for fraud.

Gertrude and Anna Midel occupied my leisure moments agreeably enough during the rest of my stay at Augsburg, but they did not make me neglect society. I spent my evenings in a very agreeable manner with Count Max de Lamberg, who occupied the position of field-marshal to the prince-bishop. His wife had all the attractions which collect good company together. At this house I made the acquaintance of the Baron von Selentin, a captain in the Prussian service, who was recruiting for the King of Prussia at Augsburg. I was particularly drawn to the Count Lamberg by his taste for literature. He was an extremely learned man, and has published some excellent works. I kept up a correspondence with him till his death, by his own fault, in 1792, four years from the time of my writing. I say by his fault, but I should have said by the fault of his doctors, who treated him mercurially for a disease which was not venereal; and this treatment not only killed him but took away his good name.

His widow is still alive, and lives in Bavaria, loved by her friends and her daughters, who all made excellent marriages.

At this time a miserable company of Italian actors made their appearance in Augsburg, and I got them permission to play in a small and wretched theatre. As this was the occasion of an incident which diverted me, the hero, I shall impart it to my readers in the hope of its amusing them also.

CHAPTER XV

"Chevalier de Seingalt"

A WOMAN, ugly enough, but lively like all Italians, called on me, and asked me to intercede with the police to obtain permission for her company to act in Augsburg. In spite of her ugliness she was a poor fellow-countrywoman, and without asking her name, or ascertaining whether the company was good or bad, I promised to do my best, and had no difficulty in obtaining the favour.

I went to the first performance, and saw to my surprise that the chief actor was a Venetian, and a fellow-student of mine, twenty years before, at St. Cyprian's College. His name was Bassi, and like myself he had given up the priesthood. Fortune had made an actor of him, and he looked wretched enough, while I, the adventurer, had a prosperous air.

I felt curious to hear his adventures, and I was also actuated by that feeling of kindliness which draws one towards the companions of one's youthful and especially one's school days, so I went to the back as soon as the curtain fell. He recognised me directly, gave a joyful cry, and after he had embraced me he introduced me to his wife, the woman who had called on me, and to his daughter, a girl of thirteen or fourteen, whose dancing had delighted me. He did not stop here, but turning to his mates, of whom he was chief, introduced me to them as his best friend. These worthy people, seeing me dressed like a lord, with a cross on my breast, took me for a cosmopolitan charlatan who was expected at Augsburg, and Bassi, strange to say, did not undeceive them. When the company had taken off its stage rags and put on its everyday rags, Bassi's ugly wife took me by the arm and said I must come and sup with her. I let myself be led, and we soon got to just the kind of room I had imagined. It was a huge room on the ground-floor, which served for kitchen, dining-room, and bedroom all at once. In the middle stood a long table, part of which was covered with a cloth which looked as if it had been in use for a month, and at the other end of the room somebody was washing certain earthenware dishes in a dirty pan. This den was lighted by one candle stuck in the neck

of a broken bottle, and as there were no snuffers Bassi's wife snuffed it cleverly with her finger and thumb, wiping her hand on the table-cloth after throwing the burnt wick on the floor. An actor with long moustaches, who played the villain in the various pieces, served an enormous dish of hashed-up meat, swimming in a sea of dirty water dignified with the name of sauce; and the hungry family proceeded to tear pieces of bread off the loaf with their fingers or teeth, and then to dip them in the dish; but as all did the same no one had a right to be disgusted. A large pot of ale passed from hand to hand, and with all this misery mirth displayed itself on every countenance, and I had to ask myself what is happiness. For a second course there was a dish of fried pork, which was devoured with great relish. Bassi was kind enough not to press me to take part in this banquet, and I felt obliged to him.

The meal over, he proceeded to impart to me his adventures, which were ordinary enough, and like those which many a poor devil has to undergo; and while he talked his pretty daughter sat on my knee. Bassi brought his story to an end by saying that he was going to Venice for the carnival, and was sure of making a lot of money. I wished him all the luck he could desire, and on his asking me what profession I followed, the fancy took me to reply that I was a doctor.

"That's a better trade than mine," said he, "and I am happy to be able to give you a valuable present."

"What is that?" I asked.

"The receipt for the Venetian Specific, which you can sell at two florins a pound, while it will only cost you four gros."

"I shall be delighted; but tell me, how is the treasury?"

"Well, I can't complain for a first night. I have paid all expenses, and have given my actors a florin apiece. But I am sure I don't know how I am to play to-morrow, as the company has rebelled; they say they won't act unless I give each of them a florin in advance."

"They don't ask very much, however."

"I know that, but I have no money, and nothing to pledge; but they will be sorry for it afterwards, as I am sure I shall make at least fifty florins to-morrow."

"How many are there in the company?"

"Fourteen, including my family. Could you lend me ten florins? I would pay you back to-morrow night."

"Certainly, but I should like to have you all to supper at the nearest inn to the theatre. Here are the ten florins."

The poor devil overflowed with gratitude, and said he would order supper at a florin a head, according to my instructions. I thought the sight of fourteen famished actors sitting down to a good supper would be rather amusing.

The company gave a play the next evening, but as only thirty or at most forty people were present, poor Bassi did not know where to turn to pay for the lighting and the orchestra. He was in despair; and instead of returning my ten florins he begged me to lend him another ten, still in the hope of a good house next time. I consoled him by saying we would talk it over after supper, and that I would go to the inn to wait for my guests.

I made the supper last three hours by dint of passing the bottle freely. My reason was that I had taken a great interest in a young girl from Strasburg, who played singing chambermaids. Her features were exquisite and her voice charming, while she made me split my sides with laughing at her Italian pronounced with an Alsatian accent, and at her gestures, which were of the most comic description.

I was determined to possess her in the course of the next twenty-four hours, and before the party broke up I spoke as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I will engage you myself for a week at fifty florins a day on the condition that you acknowledge me as your manager for the time being, and pay all the expenses of the theatre. You must charge the prices I name for seats, five members of the company to be chosen by me must sup with me every evening. If the receipts amount to more than fifty florins, we will share the overplus between us."

My proposal was welcomed with shouts of joy, and I called for pen, ink, and paper, and drew up the agreement.

"For to-morrow," I said to Bassi, "the prices for admission shall remain the same, but the day after we will see what can be done. You and your family will sup with me to-morrow, as also the young Alsatian, whom I could never separate from her dear Harlequin."

He issued bills of an enticing description for the following evening; but, in spite of all, the pit only contained a score of common people, and nearly all the boxes were empty.

Bassi had done his best, and when we met at supper he came up to me looking extremely confused, and gave me ten or twelve florins.

"Courage!" said I; and I proceeded to share them among the guests present.

We had a good supper, and I kept them at table till midnight, giving them plenty of choice wine and playing a thousand pranks with Bassi's daughter and the young Alsatian, who sat one on each side of me. I did not heed the jealous Harlequin, who seemed not to relish my familiarities with his sweetheart. The latter lent herself to my endearments with a bad enough grace, as she hoped Harlequin would marry her, and consequently did not want to vex him. When supper was over, we rose, and I took her between my arms, laughing, and caressing her in a manner which seemed too suggestive to the lover, who tried to pull me away. I thought this rather too much in my turn, and seizing him by his shoulders I dismissed him with a hearty kick, which he received with great humility. However, the situation assumed a melancholy aspect, for the poor girl began to weep bitterly. Bassi and his wife, two hardened sinners, laughed at her tears, and Bassi's daughter said that her lover had offered me great provocation; but the young Alsatian continued weeping, and told me that she would never sup with me again if I did not make her lover return.

"I will see to all that," said I; and four sequins soon made her all smiles again. She even tried to show me that she was not really cruel, and that she would be still less so if I could manage the jealous Harlequin. I promised everything, and she did her best to convince me that she would be quite complaisant on the first opportunity. I ordered Bassi to give notice that the pit would be two florins and the boxes a ducat, but that the gallery would be opened freely to the first comers.

"We shall have nobody there," said he, looking alarmed.

"Maybe, but that remains to be seen. You must request twelve soldiers to keep order, and I will pay for them."

"We shall want some soldiers to look after the mob which will besiege the gallery, but as for the rest of the house . . ."

"Again I tell you, we shall see. Carry out my instructions, and whether they prove successful or no, we will have a merry supper as usual."

The next day I called upon the Harlequin in his little den of a room, and with two louis, and a promise to respect his mistress, I made him as soft as a glove.

Bassi's bills made everybody laugh. People said he must be mad; but when it was ascertained that it was the lessee's speculation, and that I was the lessee, the accusation of madness was turned on me, but what did I care? At night the gallery was full an hour before the rise of the curtain; but the pit was empty, and there was nobody in the boxes with the exception of Count Lamberg, a Genoese abbé named Bolo, and a young man who appeared to me a woman in disguise.

The actors surpassed themselves, and the thunders of applause from the gallery enlivened the performance.

When we got to the inn, Bassi gave me the three ducats for the three boxes, but of course I returned them to him; it was quite a little fortune for the poor actors. I sat down at table between Bassi's wife and daughter, leaving the Alsatian to her lover. I told the manager to persevere in the same course, and to let those laugh who would, and I made him promise to play all his best pieces.

When the orgy was over I emptied my purse on the table, and enjoyed the eagerness with which they shared a score of sequins.

This indulgence at a time when I had not yet recovered my full strength made me enjoy a long sleep. Just as I awoke I was handed a summons to appear before the burgomaster. I made haste with my toilet, for I felt curious to know the reason of this citation, and I was aware I had nothing to fear. When I appeared, the magistrate addressed me in German, to which I turned a deaf ear, for I only knew enough of that language to ask for necessaries. When he was informed of my ignorance of German he addressed me in Latin, not of the Ciceronian kind by any means, but in that peculiar dialect which obtains at most of the German universities.

"Why do you bear a false name?" he asked.

"My name is not false. You can ask Carli, the banker, who has paid me fifty thousand florins."

"I know that; but your name is Casanova, so why do you call yourself Seingalt?"

"I take this name, or rather I have taken it, because it belongs to me, and in such a manner that if anyone else dared to take

it I should contest it as my property by every legitimate resource."

"Ah! and how does this name belong to you?"

"Because I invented it; but that does not prevent my being Casanova as well."

"Sir, you must choose between Casanova and Seingalt; a man cannot have two names."

"The Spaniards and Portuguese often have half a dozen names."

"But you are not a Spaniard or a Portuguese; you are an Italian: and, after all, how can one invent a name?"

"It's the simplest thing in the world."

"Kindly explain."

"The alphabet belongs equally to the whole human race; no one can deny that. I have taken eight letters and combined them in such a way as to produce the word 'Seingalt.' It pleased me, and I have adopted it as my surname, being firmly persuaded that as no one had borne it before, no one could deprive me of it, or carry it without my consent."

"This is a very odd idea. Your arguments are rather specious than well grounded, for your name ought to be none other than your father's name."

"I suspect that there you are mistaken; the name you yourself bear because your father bore it before you, has not existed from all eternity; it must have been invented by an ancestor of yours who did not get it from his father, or else your name would have been Adam. Does your worship agree to that?"

"I am obliged to; but all this is strange, very strange."

"You are again mistaken. It's quite an old custom, and I engage to give you by to-morrow a long list of names invented by worthy people still living, who are allowed to enjoy their names in peace and quietness without being cited to the town hall to explain how they got them."

"But you will confess that there are laws against false names?"

"Yes, but I repeat this name is my true name. Your name, which I honour, though I do not know it, cannot be more true than mine, for it is possible that you are not the son of the gentleman you consider your father."

He smiled and escorted me out, telling me that he would make inquiries about me of M. Carli.

I took the part of going to M. Carli's myself. The story made him laugh. He told me that the burgomaster was a Catholic, a worthy man, well to do, but rather thick-headed; in short, a fine subject for a joke.

The following morning M. Carli asked me to breakfast, and afterwards to dine with the burgomaster.

"I saw him yesterday," said he, "and we had a long talk, in the course of which I succeeded in convincing him on the question of names, and he is now quite of your opinion."

I accepted the invitation with pleasure, as I was sure of seeing some good company. I was not undeceived; there were some charming women and several agreeable men. Amongst others, I noticed the woman in man's dress I had seen at the theatre. I watched her at dinner, and I was the more convinced that she was a woman. Nevertheless, everybody addressed her as a man, and she played the part to admiration. I, however, being in search of amusement, and not caring to seem as if I were taken in, began to talk to her in a strain of gallantry as one talks to a woman, and I contrived to let her know that if I were not sure of her sex I had very strong suspicions. She pretended not to understand me, and everyone laughed at my feigned expression of offence.

After dinner, while we were taking coffee, the pretended gentleman showed a canon who was present a portrait on one of her rings. It represented a young lady who was in the company, and was an excellent likeness — an easy enough matter, as she was very ugly. My conviction was not disturbed, but when I saw the impostor kissing the young lady's hand with mingled affection and respect, I ceased jesting on the question of her sex. M. Carli took me aside for a moment, and told me that in spite of his effeminate appearance this individual was a man, and was shortly going to marry the young lady whose hand he had just kissed.

"It may be so," said I, "but I can't believe it all the same."

However, the pair were married during the carnival, and the husband obtained a rich dowry with his wife. The poor girl died of grief in the course of a year, but did not say a word till she was on her death-bed. Her foolish parents, ashamed of having been deceived so grossly, dared not say anything, and got the female swindler out of the way; she had taken good

care, however, to lay a firm hold on the dowry. The story became known, and gave the good folk of Augsburg much amusement, while I became renowned for my sagacity in piercing the disguise.

I continued to enjoy the society of my two servants and of the fair Alsatian, who cost me a hundred louis. At the end of a week my agreement with Bassi came to an end, leaving him with some money in his pocket. He continued to give performances, returning to the usual prices and suppressing the free gallery. He did very fair business.

I left Augsburg towards the middle of December.

I was vexed on account of Gertrude, who believed herself with child, but could not make up her mind to accompany me to France. Her father would have been pleased for me to take her; he had no hopes of getting her a husband, and would have been glad enough to get rid of her by my making her my mistress.

We shall hear more of her in the course of five or six years, as also of my excellent cook, Anna Midel, to whom I gave a present of four hundred florins. She married shortly afterwards, and when I visited the town again I found her unhappy.

I could not make up my mind to forgive Le Duc, who rode on the coachman's box, and when we were in Paris, half-way along the Rue St. Antoine, I made him take his trunk and get down; and I left him there without a character, in spite of his entreaties. I never heard of him again, but I still miss him, for, in spite of his great failings, he was an excellent servant. Perhaps I should have called to mind the important services he had rendered me at Stuttgart, Soleure, Naples, Florence, and Turin; but I could not pass over his impudence in compromising me before the Augsburg magistrate. If I had not succeeded in bringing a certain theft home to him, it would have been laid to my door, and I should have been dishonoured.

I had done a good deal in saving him from justice, and, besides, I had rewarded him liberally for all the special services he had done me.

From Augsburg I went to Bâle by way of Constance, where I stayed at the dearest inn in Switzerland. The landlord, Imhoff, was the prince of cheats, but his daughters were amusing, and after a three days' stay I continued my journey. I got to Paris on the last day of the year 1761, and I left the coach at the

house in the Rue du Bacq, where my good angel Madame d'Urfé had arranged me a suite of rooms with the utmost elegance.

I spent three weeks in these rooms without going anywhere, in order to convince the worthy lady that I had only returned to Paris to keep my word to her, and make her be born again a man.

We spent the three weeks in making preparations for this divine operation, and our preparations consisted of devotions to each of the seven planets on the days consecrated to each of the intelligences. After this I had to seek, in a place which the spirits would point out to me, for a maiden, the daughter of an adept, whom I was to impregnate with a male child in a manner only known to the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross. Madame d'Urfé was to receive the child into her arms the moment it was born, and to keep it beside her in bed for seven days. At the end of the seven days she would die with her lips on the lips of the child, who would thus receive her reasonable soul, whereas before it had only possessed a vegetal soul.

This being done, it was to be my part to care for the child with the magisterium which was known to me, and as soon as it had attained to its third year Madame d'Urfé would begin to recover her self-consciousness, and then I was to begin to initiate her in the perfect knowledge of the Great Work.

The operation must take place under the full moon during the months of April, May, or June. Above all, Madame d'Urfé was to make a will in favour of the child, whose guardian I was to be till its thirteenth year.

This sublime madwoman had no doubts whatever as to the truth of all this, and burned with impatience to see the virgin who was destined to be the vessel of election. She begged me to hasten my departure.

I had hoped, in obtaining my answers from the oracle, that she would be deterred by the prospect of death, and I reckoned on the natural love of life making her defer the operation for an indefinite period. But such was not the case, and I found myself obliged to keep my word, in appearance at all events, and to go on my quest for the mysterious virgin.

What I wanted was some young hussy whom I could teach the part, and I thought of the Corticelli. She had been at

Prague for the last nine months, and when we were at Bologna I had promised to come and see her before the end of the year. But as I was leaving Germany — by no means a land of pleasant memories to me — I did not think it was worth while going out of my way for such a trifle in the depth of winter. I resolved to send her enough money for the journey, and to let her meet me in some French town.

M. de Fouquet, a friend of Madame d'Urfé's, was Governor of Metz, and I felt sure that, with a letter of introduction from Madame d'Urfé, this nobleman would give me a distingushed reception. Besides, his nephew, the Comte de Lastic, whom I knew well, was there with his regiment. For these reasons I chose Metz as a meeting-place with the virgin Corticelli, to whom this new part would certainly be a surprise. Madame d'Urfé gave me the necessary instructions, and I left Paris on January 25th, 1762, loaded with presents. I had a letter of credit to a large amount, but I did not make use of it as my purse was abundantly replenished.

I took no servant, for after Costa's robbing me and Le Duc's cheating me I felt as if I could not trust in anyone. I got to Metz in two days, and put up at the Roi Dagobert, an excellent inn, where I found the Comte de Louvenhaupt, a Swede, whom I had met at the house of the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, mother of the Empress of Russia. He asked me to sup with him and the Duc de Deux-Ponts, who was travelling incognito to Paris to visit Louis XV., whose constant friend he was.

The day after my arrival I took my letters to the governor, who told me I must dine with him every day. M. de Lastic had left Metz, much to my regret, as he would have contributed in no small degree to the pleasure of my stay. The same day I wrote to the Corticelli, sending her fifty louis, and telling her to come with her mother as soon as possible, and to get someone who knew the way to accompany her. She could not leave Prague before the beginning of Lent, and to make sure of her coming I promised that I would make her fortune.

In four or five days I knew my way about the town, but I did not frequent polite assemblies, preferring to go to the theatre, where a comic opera singer had captivated me. Her name was Raton, and she was only fifteen, after the fashion of actresses who always subtract at least two or three years from their age.

However, this failing is common to women, and is a pardonable one, since to be youthful is the greatest of all advantages to them. Raton was not so much handsome as attractive.

I kept Raton at a louis a day till the arrival of the Corticelli, and she had to be faithful to me, as I never let her go out of my sight. I liked the girl so well and found her so pleasant that I was sorry that the Corticelli was coming; however, I was told of her arrival one night just as I was leaving my box at the theatre. My footman told me in a loud voice that my lady wife, my daughter, and a gentleman had just arrived from Frankfort, and were awaiting me at the inn.

"Idiot," I exclaimed, "I have no wife and no daughter."

However, all Metz heard that my family had arrived.

The Corticelli threw her arms round my neck, laughing as usual, and her mother presented me to the worthy man who had accompanied them from Prague to Metz. He was an Italian named Monti, who had lived for a long time at Prague, where he taught his native language. I saw that M. Monti and the old woman were suitably accommodated, and I then led the young fool into my room. I found her changed for the better; she had grown, her shape was improved, and her pleasant manners made her a very charming girl.

CHAPTER XVI

Hocus-Pocus

"WHY did you allow your mother to call herself my wife, little simpleton? Do you think that's a compliment to my judgment? She might have given herself out for your governess, as she wishes to pass you off as my daughter."

"My mother is an obstinate old woman who had rather be whipped at the cart-tail than call herself my governess. She has very narrow ideas, and always thinks that governess and procuress mean the same thing."

"She's an old fool, but we will make her hear reason either with her will or in spite of it. But you look well dresssed, have you made your fortune?"

"At Prague I captivated the affections of Count N**, and he proved a generous lover. But let your first action be to send back M. Monti. The worthy man has his family at Prague to look after; he can't afford to stay here long."

"True, I will see about it directly."

The coach started for Frankfort the same evening, and summoning Monti I thanked him for his kindness and paid him generously, so he went off well pleased.

I had nothing further to do at Metz, so I took leave of my new friends, and in two days' time I was at Nancy, where I wrote to Madame d'Urfé that I was on my way back with a virgin, the last of the family of Lascaris, who had once reigned at Constantinople. I begged her to receive her from my hands, at a country-house which belonged to her, where we should be occupied for some days in cabalistic ceremonies.

She answered that she would await us at Pont-Carré, an old castle four leagues distant from Paris, and that she would welcome the young princess with all possible kindness.

"I owe her all the more friendship," added the sublime madwoman, "as the family of Lascaris is connected with the family of d'Urfé, and as I am to be born again in the seed of the happy virgin."

I felt that my task would be not exactly to throw cold water on her enthusiasm, but to hold it in check and to moderate its manifestations. I therefore explained to her by return of post that she must be content to treat the virgin as a countess, not a princess, and I ended by informing her that we should arrive, accompanied by the countess's governess, on the Monday of Holy Week.

I spent twelve days at Nancy, instructing the young madcap in the part she had to play, and endeavouring to persuade her mother that she must be content herself with being the Countess Lascaris's humble servant. It was a task of immense difficulty; it was not enough to show her that our success depended on her submitting; I had to threaten to send her back to Bologna by herself. I had good reason to repent of my perseverance. That woman's obstinacy was an inspiration of my good angel's, bidding me avoid the greatest mistake I ever made.

On the day appointed we reached Pont-Carré. Madame d'Urfé, whom I had advised of the exact hour of our arrival, had

the drawbridge of the castle lowered, and stood in the archway in the midst of her people, like a general surrendering with all the honours of war. The dear lady, whose madness was but an excess of wit, gave the false princess so distinguished a reception that she would have shown her amazement if I had not warned her of what she might expect. Thrice did she clasp her to her breast with a tenderness that was quite maternal, calling her her beloved niece, and explaining the entire pedigrees of the families of Lascaris and d'Urfé to make the countess understand how she came to be her niece. I was agreeably surprised to see the polite and dignified air with which the Italian wench listened to all this; she did not even smile, though the scene must have struck her as extremely laughable.

As soon as we got into the castle Madame d'Urfé proceeded to cense the new-comer, who received the attention with all the dignity of an opera queen, and then threw herself into the arms of the priestess, who received her with enthusiastic affection.

At dinner the countess was agreeable and talkative, which won her Madame d'Urfé's entire favour; her broken French being easily accounted for. Laura, the countess's mother, only knew her native Italian, and so kept silence. She was given a comfortable room, where her meals were brought to her, and which she only left to hear mass.

The castle was a fortified building, and had sustained several sieges in the civil wars. As its name, Pont-Carré, indicated, it was square, and was flanked by four crenelated towers and surrounded by a broad moat. The rooms were vast, and richly furnished in an old-fashioned way. The air was full of venomous gnats who devoured us and covered our faces with painful bites; but I had agreed to spend a week there, and I should have been hard put to it to find a pretext for shortening the time. Madame d'Urfé had a bed next her own for her niece, but I was not afraid of her attempting to satisfy herself as to the countess's virginity, as the oracle had expressly forbidden it under pain of failure. The operation was fixed for the fourteenth day of the April moon.

On that day we had a temperate supper, after which I went to bed. A quarter of an hour afterwards Madame d'Urfé came, leading the virgin Lascaris. She undressed her, scented her, cast a lovely veil over her body, and when the countess was laid

beside me she remained, wishing to be present at an operation which was to result in her being born again in the course of nine months.

The act was consummated in form, and then Madame d'Urfé left us alone for the rest of the night, which was well employed. Afterwards, the countess slept with her aunt till the last day of the moon, when I asked the oracle if the Countess Lascaris had conceived. That well might be, for I had spared nothing to that intent; but I thought it more prudent to make the oracle reply that the operation had failed because the small Count d'Aranda had watched us behind a screen. Madame d'Urfé was in despair, but I consoled her by a second reply, in which the oracle declared that though the operation could only be performed in France in April, it could take place out of that realm in May; but the inquisitive young count, whose influence had proved so fatal, must be sent for at least a year to some place a hundred leagues from Paris. The oracle also indicated the manner in which he was to travel; he was to have a tutor, a servant, and all in order.

The oracle had spoken, and no more was wanted. Madame d'Urfé thought of an abbé she liked for his tutor, and the count was sent to Lyons, with strong letters of commendation to M. de Rochebaron, a relation of his patroness. The young man was delighted to travel, and never had any suspicion of the way in which I had slandered him. It was not a mere fancy which suggested this course of action. I had discovered that the Corticelli was making up to him, and that her mother favoured the intrigue. I had surprised her twice in the young man's room, and though he only cared for the girl as a youth cares for all girls, the Signora Laura did not at all approve of my opposing her daughter's designs.

Our next task was to fix on some foreign town where we could again attempt the mysterious operation. We settled on Aix-la-Chapelle, and in five or six days all was ready for the journey.

The Corticelli, angry with me for having thwarted her in her projects, reproached me bitterly, and from that time began to be my enemy; she even allowed herself to threaten me if I did not get back the pretty boy, as she called him.

"You have no business to be jealous," said she, "and I am the mistress of my own actions."

"Quite right, my dear," I answered; "but it is my business to see that you do not behave like a prostitute in your present position."

The mother was in a furious rage, and said that she and her daughter would return to Bologna, and to quiet them I promised to take them there myself as soon as we had been to Aix-la-Chapelle.

Nevertheless, I did not feel at ease, and to prevent any plots taking place I hastened our departure.

We started in May, in a travelling carriage containing Madame d'Urfé, myself, the false Lascaris, and her maid and favourite named Brougnole. We were followed by a coach with two seats; in it were the Signora Laura and another servant. Two men-servants in full livery sat on the outside of our travelling carriage. We stopped a day at Brussels, and another at Liège. At Aix there were many distinguished visitors, and at the first ball we attended Madame d'Urfé presented the Lascaris to two Princesses of Mecklenburg as her niece. The false countess received their embraces with much ease and modesty, and attracted the particular attention of the Margrave of Bayreuth and the Duchess of Württemberg, his daughter, who took possession of her, and did not leave her till the end of the ball. I was on thorns the whole time, in terror lest the heroine might make some dreadful slip. She danced so gracefully that everybody gazed at her, and I was the person who was complimented on her performance. I suffered a martyrdom, for these compliments seemed to be given with malicious intent. I suspected that the ballet-girl had been discovered beneath the countess, and I felt myself dishonoured. I succeeded in speaking privately to the young wanton for a moment, and begged her to dance like a young lady, and not like a chorus girl; but she was proud of her success, and dared to tell me that a young lady might know how to dance as well as a professional dancer, and that she was not going to dance badly to please me. I was so enraged with her impudence that I would have cast her off that instant if it had been possible; but as it was not, I determined that her punishment should lose none of its sharpness by waiting; and whether it be a vice or a virtue, the desire of revenge is never extinguished in my heart till it is satisfied.

The day after the ball Madame d'Urfé presented her with a

casket containing a beautiful watch set with brilliants, a pair of diamond ear-rings, and a ring containing a ruby of fifteen carats. The whole was worth sixty thousand francs. I took possession of it to prevent her going off without my leave.

In the meantime I amused myself with play and making bad acquaintances. The worst of all was a French officer, named d'Aché, who had a pretty wife and a daughter prettier still. Before long the daughter had taken possession of the heart which the Corticelli had lost, but as soon as Madame d'Aché saw that I preferred her daughter to herself she refused to receive me at her house.

I had lent d'Aché ten louis, and I consequently felt myself entitled to complain of his wife's conduct; but he answered rudely that as I only went to the house after his daughter, his wife was quite right; that he intended his daughter to make a good match, and that if my intentions were honourable I had only to speak to the mother. His manner was still more offensive than his words, and I felt enraged, but knowing the brutal drunken characteristics of the man, and that he was always ready to draw cold steel for a yes or a no, I was silent and resolved to forget the girl, not caring to become involved with a man like her father.

I had almost cured myself of my fancy when, a few days after our conversation, I happened to go into a billiard-room where d'Aché was playing with a Swiss named Schmit, an officer in the Swedish army. As soon as d'Aché saw me he asked whether I would lay the ten louis he owed me against him.

"Yes," said I, "that will make double or quits."

Towards the end of the match d'Aché made an unfair stroke, which was so evident that the marker told him of it; but as this stroke made him the winner, d'Aché seized the stakes and put them in his pocket without heeding the marker or the other player, who, seeing himself cheated before his very eyes, gave the rascal a blow across the face with his cue. D'Aché parried the blow with his hand, and drawing his sword rushed at Schmit, who had no arms. The marker, a sturdy young fellow, caught hold of d'Aché round the body, and thus prevented murder. The Swiss went out, saying:

"We shall see each other again."

The rascally Frenchman cooled down, and said to me:

"Now, you see, we are quits."

"Very much quits."

"That's all very well; but, by God! you might have prevented the insult which has dishonoured me."

"I might have done so, but I did not care to interfere. You are strong enough to look after yourself. Schmit had not his sword but I believe him to be a brave man; and he will give you satisfaction if you will return him his money, for there can be no doubt that you lost the match."

An officer, named de Pyène, took me up and said that he himself would give me the twenty louis which d'Aché had taken, but that the Swiss must give satisfaction. I had no hesitation in promising that he would do so, and said I would bring a reply to the challenge the next morning.

I had no fears myself. The man of honour ought always to be ready to use the sword to defend himself from insult, or to give satisfaction for an insult he has offered. I know that the law of duelling is a prejudice which may be called, and perhaps rightly, barbarous, but it is a prejudice which no man of honour can contend against, and I believed Schmit to be a thorough gentleman.

I called on him at daybreak, and found him still in bed. As soon as he saw me, he said:

"I am sure you have come to ask me to fight with d'Aché. I am quite ready to burn powder with him, but he must first pay me the twenty louis he robbed me of."

"You shall have them to-morrow, and I will attend you. D'Aché will be seconded by M. de Pyène."

"Very good. I shall expect you at daybreak."

Two hours after, I saw de Pyène, and we fixed the meeting for the next day, at six o'clock in the morning. The arms were to be pistols. We chose a garden, half a league from the town, as the scene of the combat.

At daybreak I found the Swiss waiting for me at the door of his lodgings, carolling the *ranz-des-vaches*, so dear to his fellow-countrymen. I thought that a good omen.

"Here you are," said he; "let us be off, then."

On the way, he observed, "I have only fought with men of honour up to now, and I don't much care for killing a rascal; it's hangman's work."

"I know," I replied, "that it's very hard to have to risk one's life against a fellow like that."

"There's no risk," said Schmit, with a laugh. "I am certain that I shall kill him."

"How can you be certain?"

"I shall make him tremble."

He was right. This secret is infallible when it is applied to a coward. We found d'Aché and de Pyène on the field, and five or six others who must have been present from motives of curiosity.

D'Aché took twenty louis from his pocket and gave them to his enemy, saying:

"I may be mistaken, but I hope to make you pay dearly for your brutality." Then turning to me, he said:

"I owe you twenty louis also"; but I made no reply.

Schmit put the money in his purse with the calmest air imaginable, and making no reply to the other's boast placed himself between two trees, distant about four paces from one another, and drawing two pistols from his pocket said to d'Aché:

"Place yourself at a distance of ten paces, and fire first. I shall walk to and fro between these two trees, and you may walk as far if you like to do so when my turn comes to fire."

Nothing could be clearer or more calmly delivered than this explanation.

"But we must decide," said I, "who is to have the first shot."

"There is no need," said Schmit, "I never fire first; besides, the gentleman has a right to the first shot."

De Pyène placed his friend at the proper distance and then stepped aside, and d'Aché fired on his antagonist, who was walking slowly to and fro without looking at him. Schmit turned round in the coolest manner possible, and said:

"You have missed me, sir; I knew you would. Try again."

I thought he was mad, and that some arrangement would be come to; but nothing of the kind. D'Aché fired a second time, and again missed; and Schmit, without a word, but as calm as death, fired his first pistol in the air, and then covering d'Aché with his second pistol hit him in the forehead and stretched him dead on the ground. He put back his pistols into his pocket and went off directly by himself, as if he were merely continuing his walk. In two minutes I followed his example, after ascertaining that the unfortunate d'Aché no longer breathed.

I was in a state of amazement. Such a duel was more like a combat of romance than a real fact. I could not understand it; I had watched the Swiss, and had not noticed the slightest change pass over his face.

I breakfasted with Madame d'Urfé, whom I found inconsolable. It was the full moon, and at three minutes past four exactly I ought to perform the mysterious creation of the child in which she was to be born again. But the Lascaris, on whom the work was to be wrought, was twisting and turning in her bed, contorting herself in such a way that it would be impossible for me to accomplish the prolific work.

My grief, when I heard what had happened, was hypocritical; in the first place because I no longer felt any desire for the girl, and in the second because I thought I saw a way in which I could make use of the incident to take vengeance on her.

I lavished consolations on Madame d'Urfé; and on consulting the oracle I found that the Lascaris had been defiled by an evil genius, and that I must search for another virgin whose purity must be under the protection of more powerful spirits. I saw that my madwoman was perfectly happy with this, and I left her to visit the Corticelli, whom I found in bed with her mother beside her.

"You have convulsions, have you, dearest?" said I.

"No, I haven't. I am quite well, but all the same I shall have them till you give me back my jewel-casket."

"You are getting wicked, my poor child; this comes of following your mother's advice. As for the casket, if you are going to behave like this probably you will never have it."

"I will reveal all."

"You will not be believed; and I shall send you back to Bologna without letting you take any of the presents which Madame d'Urfé has given you."

"You ought to have given me back the casket when I declared myself with child."

Signora Laura told me that this was only too true, though I was not the father.

"Who is, then?" I asked.

"Count N**, whose mistress she was at Prague."

It did not seem probable, as she had no symptoms of pregnancy; still it might be so. I was obliged to plot myself to

bring the plots of these two rascally women to nought, and without saying anything to them I shut myself up with Madame d'Urfé to inquire of the oracle concerning the operation which was to make her happy.

After several answers, more obscure than any returned from the oracular tripod at Delphi, the interpretation of which I left to the infatuated Madame d'Urfé, she discovered herself — and I took care not to contradict her — that the Countess Lascaris had gone mad. I encouraged her fears, and succeeded in making her obtain from a cabalistic pyramid the statement that the reason the princess had not conceived was that she had been defiled by an evil genius — an enemy of the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross. This put Madame d'Urfé fairly on the way, and she added on her own account that the girl must be with child by a gnome.

She then erected another pyramid to obtain guidance on our quest, and I so directed things that the answer came that she must write to the moon.

This mad reply, which should have brought her to her senses, only made her more crazy than ever. She was quite ecstatic, and I am sure that if I had endeavoured to show her the nothingness of all this I should have had nothing for my trouble. Her conclusion would probably have been that I was possessed by an evil spirit, and was no longer a true Rosy Cross. But I had no idea of undertaking a cure which would have done me harm and her no good. Her chimerical notions made her happy, and the cold naked truth would doubtless have made her unhappy.

She received the order to write to the moon with the greater delight as she knew what ceremonies were to be observed in addressing that planet; but she could not dispense with the assistance of an adept, and I knew she would reckon on me. I told her I should always be ready to serve her, but that, as she knew herself, we should have to wait for the first phase of the new moon. I was very glad to gain time, for I had lost heavily at play, and I could not leave Aix-la-Chapelle before a bill, which I had drawn on M. d'O** of Amsterdam, was cashed. In the meantime we agreed that as the Countess Lascaris had become mad, we must not pay any attention to what she might say, as the words would not be hers but would proceed from the evil spirit who possessed her.

Nevertheless, we determined that as her state was a pitiable one, and should be as much alleviated as possible, she should continue to dine with us, but that in the evening she was to go to her governess and sleep with her.

After having thus disposed Madame d'Urfé to disbelieve whatever the Corticelli cared to tell her, and to concentrate all her energies on the task of writing to Selenis, the intelligence of the moon, I set myself seriously to work to regain the money I had lost at play; and here my cabala was no good to me. I pledged the Corticelli's casket for a thousand louis, and proceeded to play in an English club where I had a much better chance of winning than with Germans or Frenchmen.

Three or four days after d'Aché's death, his widow wrote me a note begging me to call on her. I found her in company with de Pyène. She told me in a lugubrious voice that her husband had left many debts unsettled, and that his creditors had seized everything she possessed; and that she was thus unable to pay the expenses of a journey, though she wanted to take her daughter with her to Colmar, and there to rejoin her family.

"You caused my husband's death," she added, "and I ask you to give me a thousand crowns; if you refuse me I shall commence a lawsuit against you, for as the Swiss officer has left, you are the only person I can prosecute."

"I am surprised at your taking such a tone towards me," I replied, coldly, "and were it not for the respect I feel for your misfortune, I should answer as bitterly as you deserve. In the first place I have not a thousand crowns to throw away, and if I had I would not sacrifice my money to threats. I am curious to know what kind of a case you could get up against me in the courts of law. As for Schmit, he fought like a brave gentleman, and I don't think you could get much out of him if he were still here. Good day, madam."

I had scarcely got fifty paces from the house when I was joined by de Pyène, who said that rather than Madame d'Aché should have to complain of me he would cut my throat on the spot. We neither of us had swords.

"Your intention is not a very flattering one," said I, "and there is something rather brutal about it. I had rather not have any affair of the kind with a man whom I don't know and to whom I owe nothing."

"You are a coward."

"I would be, you mean, if I were to imitate you. It is a matter of perfect indifference to me what opinion you may have on the subject."

"You will be sorry for this."

"Maybe, but I warn you that I never go out unattended by a pair of pistols, which I keep in good order and know how to use." So saying I showed him the pistols, and took one in my right hand.

At this the bully uttered an oath and we separated.

At a short distance from the place where this scene had occurred I met a Neapolitan named Maliterni, a lieutenant-colonel and *aide* to the Prince de Condé, commander-in-chief of the French army. This Maliterni was a boon companion, always ready to oblige, and always short of money. We were friends, and I told him what had happened.

"I should be sorry," said I, "to have anything to do with a fellow like de Pyène, and if you can rid me of him I promise you a hundred crowns."

"I dare say that can be managed," he replied, "and I will tell you what I can do to-morrow."

In point of fact, he brought me news the next day that my cut-throat had received orders from his superior officer to leave Aix-la-Chapelle at daybreak and at the same time he gave me a passport from the Prince de Condé.

I confess that this was very pleasant tidings. I have never feared to cross my sword with any man, though I never sought the barbarous pleasure of spilling men's blood; but on this occasion I felt an extreme dislike to a duel with a fellow who was probably of the same caste as his friend d'Aché.

I therefore gave Maliterni my heartiest thanks, as well as the hundred crowns I had promised him, which I considered so well employed that I did not regret their loss.

Maliterni, who was a jester of the first water, and a creature of the Marshal d'Estrées, was lacking neither in wit nor knowledge; but he was deficient in a sense of order and refinement. He was a pleasant companion, for his gaiety was inexhaustible and he had a large knowledge of the world. He attained the rank of field-marshal in 1768, and went to Naples to marry a rich heiress, whom he left a widow a year after.

The day after de Pyène's departure I received a note from Mdlle. d'Aché, begging me, for the sake of her sick mother, to come and see her. I answered that I would be at such a place at such a time, and that she could say what she liked to me.

I found her at the place and time I appointed, with her mother, whose illness, it appeared, did not prevent her from going out. She called me her persecutor, and said that since the departure of her best friend, de Pyène, she did not know where to turn; that she had pledged all her belongings, and that I, who was rich, ought to aid her, if I were not the vilest of men.

"I feel for your condition," I replied, "as I feel your abuse of me; and I cannot help saying that you have shown yourself the vilest of women in inciting de Pyène, who may be an honest man for all I know, to assassinate me. In fine, rich or not, and though I owe you nothing, I will give you enough money to take your property out of pawn, and I may possibly take you to Colmar myself, but you must first consent to my giving your charming daughter a proof of my affection."

"And you dare to make this horrible proposal to me?"

"Horrible or not, I do make it."

"I will never consent."

"Good day, madam."

I called the waiter to pay him for the refreshments I had ordered, and I gave the girl six double louis, but her proud mother forbade her to accept the money from me. I was not surprised, in spite of her distress; for the mother was in reality still more charming than the daughter, and she knew it. I ought to have given her the preference, and thus have ended the dispute, but who can account for his whims? I felt that she must hate me, for she did not care for her daughter, and it must have humiliated her bitterly to be obliged to regard her as a victorious rival.

I left them still holding the six double louis, which pride or scorn had refused, and I went to the faro-table and decided in sacrificing them to fortune; but that capricious deity, as proud as the haughty widow, refused them, and though I left them on the board for five deals I almost broke the bank. An Englishman, named Martin, offered to go shares with me, and I accepted, as I knew he was a good player; and in the course of eight or ten days we did such good business that I was not only able to take

the casket out of pledge and to cover all losses, but made a considerable profit in addition.

About this period, the Corticelli, in her rage against me, had told Madame d'Urfé the whole history of her life, of our acquaintance, and of her pregnancy. But the more truthfully she told her story so much the more did the good lady believe her to be mad, and we often laughed together at the extraordinary fancies of the traitress. Madame d'Urfé put all her trust in the instructions which Selenis would give in reply to her letter.

Nevertheless, as the girl's conduct displeased me, I made her eat her meals with her mother, while I kept Madame d'Urfé company. I assured her that we should easily find another vessel of election, the madness of the Countess Lascaris having made her absolutely incapable of participating in our mysterious rites.

Before long, d'Aché's widow found herself obliged to give me her Mimi; but I won her by kindness, and in such a way that the mother could pretend with decency to know nothing about it. I redeemed all the goods she had pawned, and although the daughter had not yet yielded entirely to my ardour, I formed the plan of taking them to Colmar with Madame d'Urfé. To make up the good lady's mind, I resolved to let that be one of the instructions from the moon, and this she would not only obey blindly but would have no suspicions as to my motive.

I managed the correspondence between Selenis and Madame d'Urfé in the following manner:

On the day appointed, we supped together in a garden beyond the town walls, and in a room on the ground-floor of the house I had made all the necessary preparations, the letter which was to fall from the moon, in reply to Madame d'Urfé's epistle, being in my pocket. At a little distance from the chamber of ceremonies I had placed a large bath filled with lukewarm water and perfumes pleasing to the deity of the night, into which we were to plunge at the hour of the moon, which fell at one o'clock.

When we had burnt incense, we sprinkled the essences appropriate to the cult of Selenis; holding the letter concealed in my left hand, with the right I graciously led Madame d'Urfé to the brink of the bath. Here stood an alabaster cup containing spirits of wine which I kindled, repeating magical words which I did not understand, but which she said after me, giving me the letter addressed to Selenis. I burnt the letter in the flame of the

spirits, beneath the light of the moon, and the credulous lady told me she saw the characters she had traced ascending in the rays of the planet.

We then got into the bath, and the letter, which was written in silver characters on green paper, appeared on the surface of the water in the course of ten minutes. As soon as Madame d'Urfé saw it, she picked it up reverently and got out of the bath with me.

We dried and scented ourselves. I told Madame d'Urfé that she might read the epistle, which she had placed on a scented silk cushion. She obeyed, and I saw sadness visibly expressed on her features when she saw that her hypostasis was deferred till the arrival of Querilinthus, whom she would see with me at Marseilles in the spring of next year. The genius also said that the Countess Lascaris could now only do her harm, and that she should consult me as to the best means of getting rid of her. The letter ended by ordering her not to leave at Aix a lady who had lost her husband, and had a daughter who was destined to be of great service to the fraternity of the R.C. She was to take them to Alsace, and not to leave them till they were there, and safe from that danger which threatened them if they were left to themselves.

Madame d'Urfé, who with all her folly was an exceedingly benevolent woman, commended the widow to my care enthusiastically, and seemed impatient to hear her whole history. I told her all the circumstances which I thought would strengthen her in her resolution to befriend them, and promised to introduce the ladies to her at the first opportunity.

We returned to Aix, and spent the night in discussing the phantoms which coursed through her brain. All was going on well, and my only care was for the journey to Aix, and how to obtain the complete enjoyment of Mimi after having so well deserved her favours.

I had a run of luck at play the next day, and in the evening I gave Madame d'Aché an agreeable surprise by telling her that I should accompany her and her Mimi to Colmar. I told her that I should begin by introducing her to the lady whom I had the honour to accompany, and I begged her to be ready by the next day as the marchioness was impatient to see her. I could see that she could scarcely believe her ears, for she thought Madame

d'Urfé was in love with me, and she could not understand her desire to make the acquaintance of two ladies who might be dangerous rivals.

I conducted them to Madame d'Urfé at the appointed hour, and they were received with a warmth which surprised them exceedingly, for they could not be expected to know that their recommendation came from the moon. We made a party of four, and while the two ladies talked together in the fashion of ladies who have seen the world, I paid Mimi particular attention, which her mother understood very well, but which Madame d'Urfé attributed to the young lady's connection with the Rosy Cross.

In the evening we all went to a ball, and there the Corticelli, who was always trying to annoy me, danced as no young lady would dance. She executed rapid steps, pirouetted, cut capers, and showed her legs; in short, she behaved like a ballet-girl. I was on thorns. An officer, who either ignored, or pretended to ignore, my supposed relation to her, asked me if she was a professional dancer. I heard another man behind me say that he thought he remembered seeing her on the boards at Prague. I resolved on hastening my departure, as I foresaw that if I stayed much longer at Aix the wretched girl would end by costing me my life.

As I have said, Madame d'Aché had a good society manner, and this put her in Madame d'Urfé's good graces, who saw in her politeness a new proof of the favour of Selenis. Madame d'Aché felt, I suppose, that she owed me some return after all I had done for her, and left the ball early, so that when I took Mimi home I found myself alone with her, and at perfect liberty to do what I liked.

In three days' time I provided the mother and daughter with their outfit, and we left Aix gladly in an elegant and convenient travelling carriage which I had provided. Half an hour before we left I made an acquaintance which afterwards proved fatal to me. A Flemish officer, unknown to me, accosted me, and painted his destitute condition in such sad colours that I felt obliged to give him twelve louis. Ten minutes after, he gave me a paper in which he acknowledged the debt, and named the time in which he could pay it. From the paper I ascertained that his name was Malingan. In ten months the reader will hear the results.

Just as we were starting I showed the Corticelli a carriage with four places, in which she, her mother, and the two maids, were to travel. At this she trembled, her pride was wounded, and for a moment I thought she was going out of her mind; she rained sobs, abuse, and curses on me. I stood the storm unmoved, however, and Madame d'Urfé only laughed at her niece's paroxysms, and seemed delighted to find herself sitting opposite to me with the servant of Selenis beside her, while Mimi was highly pleased to be so close to me.

We got to Liège at nightfall on the next day, and I contrived to make Madame d'Urfé stay there the day following, wishing to get horses to take us through the Ardennes, and thus to have the charming Mimi longer in my possession.

I rose early and went out to see the town. By the great bridge, a woman, so wrapped up in a black mantilla that only the tip of her nose was visible, accosted me, and asked me to follow her into a house with an open door which she showed me.

"As I have not the pleasure of knowing you," I replied, "prudence will not allow me to do so."

"You do know me, though," she replied, and taking me to the corner of a neighbouring street she showed me her face. What was my surprise to see the fair Stuart of Avignon, the statue of the Fountain of Vaucluse. I was very glad to meet her.

In my curiosity I followed her into the house, to a room on the first floor, where she welcomed me most tenderly. It was all no good, for I felt angry with her, and despised her advances, no doubt, because I had Mimi, and wished to keep all my love for her. However, I took three louis out of my purse and gave them to her, asking her to tell me her history.

"Stuart," she said, "was only my keeper; my real name is Ransom, and I am the mistress of a rich landed proprietor. I got back to Liège after many sufferings."

"I am delighted to hear that you are more prosperous now, but it must be confessed that your behaviour at Avignon was both preposterous and absurd. But the subject is not worth discussing. Good day, madam."

I then returned to my hotel to write an account of what I had seen to the Marquis Grimaldi.

The next day we left Liège, and were two days passing through the Ardennes. This is one of the strangest tracts in Europe: a

vast forest, the traditions of which furnished Ariosto with some splendid passages.

There is no town in the forest, and though one is obliged to cross it to pass from one country to another, hardly any of the necessaries of life are to be found in it.

The inquirer will seek in vain for vices or virtues, or manners of any kind. The inhabitants are devoid of correct ideas, but have wild notions of their own on the power of men they style scholars. It is enough to be a doctor to enjoy the reputation of an astrologer and a wizard. Nevertheless the Ardennes have a large population, as I was assured that there were twelve hundred churches in the forest. The people are good-hearted and even pleasant, especially the young girls; but as a general rule the fair sex is by no means fair in those quarters. In this vast district watered by the Meuse is the town of Bouillon — a regular hole, but in my time it was the freest place in Europe. The Duke of Bouillon was so jealous of his rights that he preferred the exercise of his prerogatives to all the honours he might have enjoyed at the Court of France. We stayed a day at Metz, but did not call on anyone; and in three days we reached Colmar, where we left Madame d'Aché, whose good graces I had completely won. Her family, in extremely comfortable circumstances, received the mother and daughter with great affection. Mimi wept bitterly when I left her, but I consoled her by saying that I would come back before long. Madame d'Urfé seemed not to mind leaving them, and I consoled myself easily enough. While congratulating myself on having made mother and daughter happy, I adored the secret paths and ways of Divine Providence.

On the following day we went to Sulzbach, where the Baron of Schaumburg, who knew Madame d'Urfé, gave us a warm welcome. I should have been sadly bored in this dull place if it had not been for gaming. Madame d'Urfé, finding herself in need of company, encouraged the Corticelli to hope to regain my good graces, and, consequently, her own. The wretched girl, seeing how easily I had defeated her projects, and to what a pass of humiliation I had brought her, had changed her part, and was now submissive enough. She flattered herself that she would regain the favour she had completely lost, and she thought the day was won when she saw that Madame d'Aché and her daughter stayed at Colmar. But what she had more at heart than

either my friendship or Madame d'Urfé's was the jewel-casket; but she dared not ask for it, and her hopes of seeing it again were growing dim. By her pleasantries at table which made Madame d'Urfé laugh she succeeded in giving me a few amorous twinges; but still I did not allow my feelings to relax my severity, and she continued to sleep with her mother.

A week after our arrival at Sulzbach I left Madame d'Urfé with the Baron of Schaumburg, and I went to Colmar in the hope of good fortune. But I was disappointed, as the mother and daughter had both made arrangements for getting married.

A rich merchant, who had been in love with the mother eighteen years before, seeing her a widow and still pretty, felt his early flames revive, and offered his hand and was accepted. A young advocate found Mimi to his taste, and asked her in marriage. The mother and daughter, fearing the results of my affection, and finding it would be a good match, lost no time in giving their consent. I was entertained in the family, and supped in the midst of a numerous and choice assemblage; but seeing that I should only annoy the ladies and tire myself in waiting for some chance favour if I stayed, I bade them adieu and returned to Sulzbach the next morning. I found there a charming girl from Strasburg, named Salzmann, three or four gamesters who had come to drink the waters, and several ladies, to whom I shall introduce the reader in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER XVII

London

IN THE month of June, 1763 — the fatal year which, according to the Memoirs, marks the definite decline of his unstable fortunes — Casanova arrives for the first time in England. The ostensible object of this journey was to bring that precocious young scamp Giuseppe Pompeati, who under the assumed name of Count d'Aranda had been educated in Paris at the expense of the Marquise d'Urfé, back to his mother, Thérèse Imer. This extraordinary woman, whose adventurous career, starting in Venice simultaneously with Casanova's, forms a strange parallel to his own, was now settled in London, where, as Madame Cornelis — her final and most

successful avatar — she had become a well-known figure of the cosmopolitan half-world. As former mistress of the Margrave of Bayreuth and of Prince Charles of Lorraine she had acquired sufficient knowledge of the great world to play the fine lady in the ever-widening sphere of her election. Her speciality was to organise subscription balls and entertainments on a lavish scale, managing at the same time to give them an air of exclusiveness which was calculated to appeal to insular snobbery. Mutual interests of a more practical and far-reaching order than Giacomo's alleged fatherhood of Thérèse's daughter, Sophie, and probably a sort of reciprocal esteem and professional solidarity, seem to have been the basis of the long, though often strained, relationship between the two Venetian adventurers.

In Paris he had left the aged marquise, continuing to "revel in the joys of her regeneration" after a second and even more elaborate hoax had been staged at Marseilles, the most tangible results of which were the "planetary offerings," in the shape of precious metals and stones, that Casanova appropriated for his own uses. He was therefore well equipped for making his bow before the elegant clientèle of his good friend "Madame Cornelis." Let us listen to him for a while:

When I got to Calais I consigned my post-chaise to the care of the landlord of the inn, and hired a packet. There was only one available for a private party, there being another for public use at six francs apiece. I paid six guineas in advance, taking care to get a proper receipt, for I knew that at Calais a man finds himself in an awkward position if he is unable to support his claim by documents.

Before the tide was out Clairmont got all my belongings on board, and I ordered my supper. The landlord told me that louis were not current in England, and offered to give me guineas in exchange for mine; but I was surprised when I found he gave me the same number of guineas as I had given him of louis. I wanted him to take the difference — four per cent. — but he refused, saying that he did not allow anything when the English gave him guineas for louis. I do not know whether he found his system a profitable one on the whole, but it was certainly so for me.

The young Count d'Aranda, to whom I had restored his humble name of Trenti, was quite resigned, but proud of having given me a specimen of his knowingness by riding post. We were

just going to sit down at table, well pleased with one another, when I heard a loud conversation in English going on near my door, and mine host came in to tell me what it was about.

"It's the courier of the Duke of Bedford, the English ambassador," said he; "he announces the approach of his master, and is disputing with the captain of the packet. He says he hired the boat by letter, and that the captain had no right to let it to you. The master maintains that he has received no such letter, and no one can prove that he is telling a lie."

I congratulated myself on having taken the packet and paid the earnest-money, and went to bed. At daybreak the landlord said that the ambassador had arrived at midnight, and that his man wanted to see me.

He came in and told me that the nobleman, his master, was in a great hurry to get to London, and that I should oblige him very much by yielding the boat to him.

I did not answer a word, but wrote a note which ran as follows:

"My lord duke may dispose of the whole of the packet, with the exception of the space necessary for my own accommodation, that of two other persons, and my luggage. I am delighted to have the opportunity of obliging the English ambassador."

The valet took the note, and returned to thank me on behalf of his master, who stipulated, however, that he should be allowed to pay for the packet.

"Tell him that it is out of the question, as the boat is paid for already."

"He will give you the six guineas."

"Tell your master that I cannot allow him to pay. I do not buy to sell again."

The duke called on me in the course of half an hour, and said that we were both of us in the right.

"However," he added, "there is a middle course, let us adopt it, and I shall be just as much indebted to you."

"What is that, my lord?"

"We will each pay half."

"My desire to oblige you, my lord, will not allow me to refuse, but it is I who will be indebted to you for the honour your lordship does me. We will start as soon as you like, and I can make my arrangements accordingly."

He shook my hand and left the room, and when he had gone

I found three guineas on the table. He had placed them there without my noticing them. An hour afterwards I returned his call, and then told the master to take the duke and his carriages on board.

We took two hours and a half in crossing the Channel; the wind was strong, but we made a good passage.

The stranger who sets his foot on English soil has need of a good deal of patience. The custom-house officials made a minute, vexatious, and even an impertinent perquisition; but as the duke and ambassador had to submit, I thought it best to follow his example; besides, resistance would be useless. The Englishman, who prides himself on his strict adherence to the law of the land, is curt and rude in his manner, and the English officials cannot be compared to the French, who know how to combine politeness with the exercise of their rights.

England is different in every respect from the rest of Europe; even the country has a different aspect, and the water of the Thames has a taste peculiar to itself. Everything has its own characteristics, and the fish, cattle, horses, men, and women are of a type not found in any other land. Their manner of living is wholly different from that of other countries, especially their cookery. The most striking feature in their character is their national pride; they exalt themselves above all other nations.

My attention was attracted by the universal cleanliness, the beauty of the country, the goodness of the roads, the reasonable charges for posting, the quickness of the horses, although they never go beyond a trot; and lastly, the construction of the towns on the Dover road; Canterbury and Rochester for instance, though large and populous, are like long passages; they are all length and no breadth.

We got to London in the evening and stopped at the house of Madame Cornelis, as Thérèse called herself. She was originally married to an actor named Imer, then to the dancer Pompeati, who committed suicide at Venice by ripping up his stomach with a razor.

In Holland she had been known as Madame Trenti, but at London she had taken the name of her lover Cornelius Rigerboos, whom she had contrived to ruin.

She lived in Soho Square, almost facing the house of the Venetian ambassador. When I arrived I followed the instruc-

tions I had received in her last letter. I left her son in the carriage, and sent up my name, expecting she would fly to meet me; but the porter told me to wait, and in a few minutes a servant in grand livery brought me a note in which Madame Cornelis asked me to get down at the house to which her servant would conduct me. I thought this rather strange behaviour, but still she might have her reasons for acting in this manner, so I did not let my indignation appear. When we got to the house, a fat woman named Rancour, and two servants, welcomed us, or rather welcomed my young friend; for the lady embraced him, told him how glad she was to see him, and did not appear to be aware of my existence.

Our trunks were taken in, and Madame Rancour, having ascertained which belonged to Cornelis, had them placed in a fine suite of three rooms, and said, pointing out to him the apartment and the two servants:

"This apartment and the two servants are for you, and I, too, am your most humble servant."

Clairmont told me that he had put my things in a room which communicated with Cornelis's. I went to inspect it, and saw directly that I was being treated as if I were a person of no consequence. The storm of anger was gathering, but, wonderful to relate, I subdued myself, and did not say a word.

"Where is your room?" I said to Clairmont.

"Near the roof, and I am to share it with one of those two louts you saw."

The worthy Clairmont, who knew my disposition, was surprised at the calm with which I said:

"Take your trunk there."

"Shall I open yours?"

"No. We will see what can be done to-morrow."

I still kept on my mask, and returned to the room of the young gentleman, who seemed to be considered as my master. I found him listening with a foolish stare to Madame Rancour, who was telling him of the splendid position his mother occupied, her great enterprise, her immense credit, the splendid house she had built, her thirty-three servants, her two secretaries, her six horses, her country-house, etc., etc.

"How is my sister Sophie?" said the young gentleman.

"Her name is Sophie, is it? She is only known as Miss Cor-

nelis. She is a beauty, a perfect prodigy, she plays at sight on several instruments, dances like Terpsichore, speaks English, French, and Italian equally well — in a word, she is really wonderful. She has a governess and a maid. Unfortunately, she is rather short for her age; she is eight."

She was ten, but as Madame Rancour was not speaking to me I refrained from interrupting her.

My lord Cornelis, who felt very tired, asked at what hour they were to sup.

"At ten o'clock and not before," said the duenna, "for Madame Cornelis is always engaged till then. She is always with her lawyer, on account of an important lawsuit she has against Sir Frederick Fermer."

I could see that I should learn nothing worth learning by listening to the woman's gossip, so I took my hat and cane and went for a walk in the immense city, taking care not to lose my way.

It was seven o'clock when I went out, and a quarter of an hour after, seeing a number of people in a coffee-house, I entered it. It was the most notorious place in London, the resort of all the rascally Italians in town. I had heard of it at Lyons, and had taken a firm resolve never to set my foot in it, but almighty chance made me go there unknown to myself. But it was my only visit.

I sat down by myself and called for a glass of lemonade, and before long a man came and sat by me to profit by the light. He had a printed paper in his hand, and I could see that the words were Italian. He had a pencil with which he scratched out some words and letters, writing the corrections in the margin. Idle curiosity made me follow him in his work, and I noticed him correcting the word "*ancora*," putting in an *h* in the margin. I was irritated by this barbarous spelling, and told him that for four centuries "*ancora*" had been spelt without an *h*.

"Quite so," said he, "but I am quoting from Boccaccio, and one should be exact in quotations."

"I apologise, sir; I see you are a man of letters."

"Well, in a small way. My name is Martinelli."

"Then you are in a great way indeed. I know you by repute, and if I am not mistaken you are a relation of Calsabigi, who has spoken of you to me. I have read some of your satires."

"May I ask to whom I have the honour of speaking?"

"My name is Seingalt. Have you finished your edition of the *Decameron?*"

"I am still at work on it, and trying to increase the number of my subscribers."

"If you will be so kind I should be glad to be of the number."

"You do me honour."

He gave me a ticket, and seeing that it was only for a guinea I took four, and telling him I hoped to see him again at the same coffee-house, the name of which I asked him, he told it me, evidently astonished at my ignorance; but his surprise vanished when I informed him that I had only been in London for an hour, and that it was my first visit to the great city.

"You will experience some trouble in finding your way back," said he, "allow me to accompany you."

When we had got out he gave me to understand that chance had led me to the Orange Coffee House, the most disreputable house in London.

"But you go there."

"Yes, but I can say with Juvenal:

'Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.'

The rogues can't hurt me; I know them and they know me; we never trouble each other."

"You have been a long time in London, I suppose."

"Five years."

"I presume you know a good many people."

"Yes, but I seldom wait on anyone but Lord Spencer. I am occupied with literary work and live all by myself. I don't make much, but enough to live on. I live in furnished apartments, and have twelve shirts and the clothes you see on my back, and that is enough for my happiness.

'Nec ultra deos lacesso.' "

I was pleased with this honest man, who spoke Italian with the most exquisite correctness.

On the way back I asked him what I had better do to get a comfortable lodging. When he heard the style in which I wished to live and the time I proposed to spend in London, he advised me to take a house completely furnished.

"You will be given an inventory of the goods," said he, "and as soon as you get a surety your house will be your castle."

"I like the idea," I answered, "but how shall I find such a house?"

"That is easily done."

He went into a shop, begged the mistress to lend him the *Advertiser*, noted down several advertisements, and said:

"That's all we have to do."

The nearest house was in Pall Mall and we went to see it. An old woman opened the door to us, and showed us the ground-floor and the three floors above. Each floor contained two rooms, and a closet. Everything shone with cleanliness; linen, furniture, carpets, mirrors, and china, and even the bells and the bolts on the doors. The necessary linen was kept in a large press, and in another was the silver plate and several sets of china. The arrangements in the kitchen were excellent, and, in a word, nothing was lacking in the way of comfort. The rent was twenty guineas a week, and, not stopping to bargain, which is never of any use in London, I told Martinelli that I would take it on the spot.

Martinelli translated what I said to the old woman, who told me that if I liked to keep her on as housekeeper I need not have a surety, and that it would only be necessary for me to pay for each week in advance. I answered that I would do so, but that she must get me a servant who could speak French or Italian as well as English. She promised to get one in a day's time, and I paid her four weeks' rent on the spot, for which she gave me a receipt under the name of the Chevalier de Seingalt. This was the name by which I was known during the whole of my stay in London.

Thus in less than two hours I was comfortably settled in a town which is sometimes described as a chaos, especially for a stranger. But in London everything is easy to him who has money and is not afraid of spending it. I was delighted to be able to escape so soon from a house where I was welcomed so ill, though I had a right to the best reception; but I was still more pleased at the chance which had made me acquainted with Martinelli, whom I had known by repute for six years.

When I got back Madame Cornelis had not yet arrived, though ten o'clock had struck. Young Cornelis was asleep on the sofa. I was enraged at the way the woman treated me, but I resolved to put a good face on it.

Before long three loud knocks announced the arrival of Madame Cornelis in a sedan-chair, and I heard her ascending the stairs. She came in and seemed glad to see me, but did not come and give me those caresses which I had a right to expect. She ran to her son and took him on her knee, but the sleepy boy did not respond to her kisses with any great warmth.

"He is very tired, like myself," said I, "and considering that we are travellers in need of rest you have kept us waiting a long time."

I do not know whether she would have answered at all, or, if so, what her answer would have been, for just at that moment a servant came in and said that supper was ready. She rose and did me the honour to take my arm, and we went into another room which I had not seen. The table was laid for four, and I was curious enough to inquire who was the fourth person.

"It was to have been my daughter, but I left her behind, as when I told her that you and her brother had arrived she asked me if you were well."

"And you have punished her for doing so?"

"Certainly, for in my opinion she ought to have asked for her brother first and then for you. Don't you think I was right?"

"Poor Sophie! I am sorry for her. Gratitude has evidently more influence over her than blood relationship."

"It is not a question of sentiment, but of teaching young persons to think with propriety."

"Propriety is often far from proper."

The woman told her son that she was working hard to leave him a fortune when she died, and that she had been obliged to summon him to England as he was old enough to help her in her business.

"And how am I to help you, my dear mother?"

"I give twelve balls and twelve suppers to the nobility, and the same number to the middle classes in the year. I have often as many as six hundred guests at two guineas a head. The expenses are enormous, and alone as I am I must be robbed, for I can't be in two places at once. Now that you are here you can keep everything under lock and key, keep the books, pay and receive accounts, and see that everyone is properly attended to at the assemblies; in fine, you will perform the duties of the master."

"And do you think that I can do all that?"

"You will easily learn it."

"I think it will be very difficult."

"One of my secretaries will come and live with you, and instruct you in everything. During the first year you will only have to acquire the English language, and to be present at my assemblies, that I may introduce you to the most distinguished people in London. You will get quite English before long."

"I would rather remain French."

"That's mere prejudice, my dear, you will like the sound of Mister Cornelis by-and-bye."

"Cornelis?"

"Yes; that is your name."

"It's a very funny one."

"I will write it down, so that you may not forget it."

Thinking that her dear son was joking, Madame Cornelis looked at me in some astonishment, and told him to go to bed, which he did instantly. When we were alone she said he struck her as badly educated, and too small for his age.

"I am very much afraid," said she, "that we shall have to begin his education all over again. What has he learnt in the last six years?"

"He might have learnt a great deal, for he went to the best boarding-school in Paris; but he only learnt what he liked, and what he liked was not much. He can play the flute, ride, fence, dance a minuet, change his shirt every day, answer politely, make a graceful bow, talk elegant trifles, and dress well. As he never had any application, he doesn't know anything about literature; he can scarcely write, his spelling is abominable, his arithmetic limited, and I doubt whether he knows in what continent England is situated."

"He has used the six years well, certainly."

"Say, rather, he has wasted them; but he will waste many more."

"My daughter will laugh at him; but then it is I who have had the care of her education. He will be ashamed when he finds her so well instructed, though she is only eight."

"He will never see her at eight, if I know anything of reckoning; she is fully ten."

"I think I ought to know the age of my own daughter. She

knows geography, history, languages, and music; she argues correctly, and behaves in a manner which is surprising in so young a child. All the ladies are in love with her. I keep her at a school of design all day; she shows a great taste for drawing. She dines with me on Sundays, and if you would care to come to dinner next Sunday you will confess that I have not exaggerated her capacities."

It was Monday. I said nothing, but I thought it strange that she did not seem to consider that I was impatient to see my daughter. She should have asked me to meet her at supper the following evening.

"You are just in time," said she, "to witness the last assembly of the year; for in a few weeks all the nobility will leave town in order to pass the summer in the country. I can't give you a ticket, as they are only issued to the nobility, but you can come as my friend and keep close to me. You will see everything. If I am asked who you are, I will say that you have superintended the education of my son in Paris, and have brought him back to me."

"You do me too much honour."

We continued talking till two o'clock in the morning, and she told me all about the suit she had with Sir Frederick Fermer. He maintained that the house she had built at a cost of ten thousand guineas belonged to him as he had furnished the money. In equity he was right, but according to English law wrong, for it was she who had paid the workmen, the contractors, and the architect; it was she that had given and received receipts, and signed all documents. The house, therefore, belonged to her, and Fermer admitted as much; but he claimed the sum he had furnished, and here was the kernel of the whole case, for she had defied him to produce a single acknowledgment of money received.

"I confess," said this honest woman, "that you have often given me a thousand pounds at a time, but that was a friendly gift, and nothing to be wondered at in a rich Englishman, considering that we were lovers and lived together."

She won her suit four times over in two years, but Fermer took advantage of the intricacies of English law to appeal again and again, and now he had gone to the House of Lords, the appeal to which might last fifteen years.

"This suit," said the honest lady, "dishonours Fermer."

"I should think it did, but you surely don't think it honours you."

"Certainly I do."

"I don't quite understand how you make that out."

"I will explain it all to you."

"We will talk it over again."

In the three hours for which we talked together this woman did not once ask me how I was, whether I was comfortable, how long I intended to stay in London, or whether I had made much money. In short she made no inquiries whatever about me, only saying with a smile, but not heedlessly:

"I never have a penny to spare."

Her receipts amounted to more than twenty-four thousand pounds per annum, but her expenses were enormous and she had debts.

I avenged myself on her indifference by not saying a word about myself. I was dressed simply but neatly, and had not any jewellery or diamonds about my person.

I went to bed annoyed with her, but glad to have discovered the badness of her heart. In spite of my longing to see my daughter I determined not to take any steps to meet her till the ensuing Sunday, when I was invited to dinner.

Early next morning I told Clairmont to put all my goods and chattels in a carriage, and when all was ready I went to take leave of young Cornelis, telling him I was going to live in Pall Mall, and leaving him my address.

"You are not going to stay with me, then?" said he.

"No, your mother doesn't know how to welcome or to treat me."

"I think you are right. I shall go back to Paris."

"Don't do anything so silly. Remember that here you are at home, and that in Paris you might not find a roof to shelter you. Farewell; I shall see you on Sunday."

I was soon settled in my new house, and I went out to call on M. Zuccato, the Venetian ambassador. I gave him M. Morosini's letter, and he said, coldly, that he was glad to make my acquaintance. When I asked him to present me at Court, the insolent fool only replied with a smile, which might fairly be described as contemptuous. It was the aristocratic pride coming

out, so I returned his smile with a cold bow, and never set foot in his house again.

On leaving Zuccato I called on Lord Egremont, and finding him ill left my letter with the porter. He died a few days after, so M. Morosini's letters were both useless through no fault of his. We shall learn presently what was the result of the little note.

I then went to the Comte de Guerchi, the French ambassador, with a letter from the Marquis Chauvelin, and I received a warm welcome. This nobleman asked me to dine with him the following day, and told me that if I liked he would present me at Court after chapel on Sunday. It was at that ambassador's table that I made the acquaintance of the Chevalier d'Eon, the secretary of the embassy, who afterwards became famous. This Chevalier d'Eon was a handsome woman who had been an advocate and a captain of dragoons before entering the diplomatic service; she served Louis XV. as a valiant soldier and a diplomatist of consummate skill. In spite of her manly ways I soon recognised her as a woman; her voice was not that of a *castrato*, and her shape was too rounded to be a man's. I say nothing of the absence of hair on her face, as that might be an accident.

In the first days of my stay in London I made the acquaintance of my bankers, who held at least three hundred thousand francs of my money. They all honoured my drafts and offered their services to me, but I did not make use of their good offices.

I visited the theatres of Covent Garden and Drury Lane, but I could not extract much enjoyment out of the performances as I did not know a word of English. I dined at all the taverns, high and low, to get some insight into the peculiar manners of the English. In the morning I went on 'Change, where I made some friends. It was there that a merchant to whom I spoke got me a Negro servant who spoke English, French, and Italian with equal facility; and the same individual procured me a cook who spoke French. I also visited the bagnios where a rich man can sup, bathe, and sleep with a fashionable courtesan, of which species there are many in London. It makes a magnificent debauch and only costs six guineas. The expense may be reduced to a hundred francs, but economy in pleasure is not to my taste.

On Sunday I made an elegant toilet and went to Court about eleven, and met the Comte de Guerchi as we had arranged. He

introduced me to George III., who spoke to me, but in such a low voice that I could not understand him and had to reply by a bow. The queen made up for the king, however, and I was delighted to observe that the proud ambassador from my beloved Venice was also present. When M. de Guerchi introduced me under the name of the Chevalier de Seingalt, Zuccato looked astonished, for M. Morosini had called me Casanova in his letter. The queen asked me from what part of France I came, and understanding from my answer that I was from Venice, she looked at the Venetian ambassador, who bowed as if to say that he had no objection to make. Her majesty then asked me if I knew the ambassadors extraordinary, who had been sent to congratulate the king, and I replied that I had the pleasure of knowing them intimately, and that I had spent three days in their society at Lyons, where M. Morosini gave me letters for my Lord d'Egremont and M. Zuccato.

"M. Querini amused me extremely," said the queen; "he called me a little devil."

"He meant to say that your highness is as witty as an angel."

I longed for the queen to ask me why I had not been presented by M. Zuccato, for I had a reply on the tip of my tongue that would have deprived the ambassador of his sleep for a week, while I should have slept soundly, for vengeance is a divine pleasure, especially when it is taken on the proud and foolish; but the whole conversation was a compound of nothings, as is usual in courts.

After my interview was over I got into my sedan-chair and went to Soho Square. A man in court dress cannot walk the streets of London without being pelted with mud by the mob, while the gentlemen look on and laugh. All customs must be respected; they are all at once worthy and absurd.

When I got to the house of Madame Cornelis, I and my Negro, Jarbe, were shown upstairs, and conducted through a suite of gorgeous apartments to a room where the lady of the house was sitting with two English ladies and two English gentlemen. She received me with familiar politeness, made me sit down in an arm-chair beside her, and then continued the conversation in English without introducing me. When her steward told her that dinner was ready, she gave orders for the children to be brought down.

I had long desired this meeting, and when I saw Sophie I ran to meet her; but she, who had profited by her mother's instructions, drew back with profound courtesy and a compliment learnt by heart. I did not say anything for fear it should embarrass her, but I felt grieved to the heart.

Madame Cornelis then brought forward her son, telling the company that I had brought him to England after superintending his education for six years. She spoke in French, so I was glad to see that her friends understood that language.

We sat down to table; Madame Cornelis between her two children, and I between the two Englishwomen, one of whom delighted me by her pleasant wit. I attached myself to her as soon as I noticed that the mistress of the house only spoke to me by chance and that Sophie did not look at me. She was so like me that no mistake was possible. I could see that she had been carefully tutored by her mother to behave in this manner, and I felt this treatment to be both absurd and impertinent. I did not want to let anyone see that I was angry, so I began to discourse in a pleasant strain on the peculiarities of English manners, taking care, however, not to say anything which might wound the insular pride of the English guests. My idea was to make them laugh and to make myself agreeable, and I succeeded, but not a word did I speak to Madame Cornelis; I did not so much as look at her.

The lady next to me, after admiring the beauty of my lace, asked me what was the news at Court.

"It was all news to me," said I, "for I went there to-day for the first time."

"Have you seen the king?" said Sir Joseph Cornelis.

"My dear, you should not ask such questions," said his mother.

"Why not?"

"Because the gentleman may not wish to answer them."

"On the contrary, madam, I like being questioned. I have been teaching your son for the last six years to be always asking something, for that is the way to acquire knowledge. He who asks nothing knows nothing."

I had touched her to the quick, and she fell into a sulky silence.

"You have not told me yet," said the lad, "whether you saw the king."

"Yes, my man, I saw the king and the queen, and both their majesties did me the honour to speak to me."

"Who introduced you?"

"The French ambassador."

"I think you will agree with me," said the mother, "that last question was a little too much."

"Certainly it would be if it were addressed to a stranger, but not to me who am his friend. You will notice that the reply he extracted from me did me honour. If I had not wished it to be known that I had been at Court, I should not have come here in this dress."

"Very good; but as you like to be questioned, may I ask you why you were not presented by your own ambassador?"

"Because the Venetian ambassador would not present me, knowing that his government have a bone to pick with me."

By this time we had come to the dessert, and poor Sophie had not uttered a syllable.

"Say something to M. de Seingalt," said her mother.

"I don't know what to say," she answered. "Tell M. de Seingalt to ask me some questions, and I will answer to the best of my ability."

"Well, Sophie, tell me in what studies you are engaged at the present time."

"I am learning drawing; if you like I will show you some of my work."

"I will look at it with pleasure; but tell me how you think you have offended me; you have a guilty air."

"I, sir? I do not think I have done anything amiss."

"Nor do I, my dear; but as you do not look at me when you speak I thought you must be ashamed of something. Are you ashamed of your fine eyes? You blush. What have you done?"

"You are embarrassing her," said the mother. "Tell him, my dear, that you have done nothing, but that a feeling of modesty and respect prevents you from gazing at the persons you address."

"Yes," said I; "but if modesty bids young ladies lower their eyes, politeness should make them raise them now and again."

No one replied to this objection, which was a sharp cut for the absurd woman; but after an interval of silence we rose from the table, and Sophie went to fetch her drawings.

"I won't look at anything, Sophie, unless you will look at me."

"Come," said her mother, "look at the gentleman."

She obeyed as quickly as lightning, and I saw the prettiest eyes imaginable.

"Now," said I, "I know you again, and perhaps you may remember having seen me."

"Yes, although it is six years ago since we met, I recognised you directly."

"And yet you did not look me in the face! If you knew how impolite it was to lower your eyes when you are addressing anyone, you would not do it. Who can have given you such a bad lesson?"

The child glanced towards her mother, who was standing by a window, and I saw who was her preceptress.

I felt that I had taken sufficient vengeance, and began to examine her drawings, to praise them in detail, and to congratulate her on her talents. I told her that she ought to be thankful to have a mother who had given her so good an education. This indirect compliment pleased Madame Cornelis, and Sophie, now free from all restraint, gazed at me with an expression of childlike affection which ravished me. Her features bore the imprint of a noble soul within, and I pitied her for having to grow up under the authority of a foolish mother. Sophie went to the piano, played with feeling, and then sang some Italian airs, to the accompaniment of the guitar, too well for her age. She was too precocious, and wanted much more discretion in her education than Madame Cornelis was able to give her.

When her singing had been applauded by the company, her mother told her to dance a minuet with her brother, who had learnt in Paris, but danced badly for want of a good carriage. His sister told him so with a kiss, and then asked me to dance with her, which I did very readily. Her mother, who thought she had danced exquisitely, as was indeed the case, told her that she must give me a kiss. She came up to me, and drawing her on my knee I covered her face with kisses, which she returned with the greatest affection. Her mother laughed with all her heart, and then Sophie, beginning to be doubtful again, went up to her and asked if she were angry. Her mother comforted her with a kiss.

After we had taken coffee, which was served in the French

fashion, Madame Cornelis showed me a magnificent hall which she had built, in which she could give supper to four hundred persons seated at one table. She told me, and I could easily believe her, that there was not such another in all London.

The last assembly was given before the prorogation of Parliament; it was to take place in four or five days. She had a score of pretty girls in her service, and a dozen footmen all in full livery.

"They all rob me," said she, "but I have to put up with it. What I want is a sharp man to help me and watch over my interests; if I had such an one I should make an immense fortune in a comparatively short time; for when it is a question of pleasure, the English do not care what they spend."

I told her I hoped she would find such a man and make the fortune, and then I left her, admiring her enterprise.

When I left Soho Square I went to St. James's Park to see Lady Harrington, for whom I bore a letter, as I have mentioned. This lady lived in the precincts of the Court, and received company every Sunday. It was allowable to play in her house, as the park is under the jurisdiction of the Crown. In any other place there is no playing cards or singing on Sundays. The town abounds in spies, and if they have reason to suppose that there is any gaming or music going on, they watch for their opportunity, slip into the house, and arrest all the bad Christians, who are diverting themselves in a manner which is thought innocent enough in any other country. But to make up for this severity the Englishman may go in perfect liberty to the tavern or the brothel, and sanctify the Sabbath as he pleases.

I called on Lady Harrington, and, having sent up my letter, she summoned me into her presence. I found her in the midst of about thirty persons, but the hostess was easily distinguished by the air of welcome she had for me.

After I had made my bow she told me she had seen me at Court in the morning, and that without knowing who I was she had been desirous of making my acquaintance. Our conversation lasted three-quarters of an hour, and was composed of those frivolous observations and idle questions which are commonly addressed to a traveller.

The lady was forty, but she was still handsome. She was well known for her gallantries and her influence at Court. She in-

troduced me to her husband and her four daughters, charming girls of a marriageable age. She asked me why I had come to London when everybody was on the point of going out of town. I told her that as I always obeyed the impulse of the moment, I should find it difficult to answer her question; besides, I intended staying for a year, so that the pleasure would be deferred but not lost.

My reply seemed to please her by its character of English independence, and she offered with exquisite grace to do all in her power for me.

"In the meanwhile," said she, "we will begin by letting you see all the nobility at Madame Cornelis's on Thursday next. I can give you a ticket to admit to ball and supper. It is two guineas."

I gave her the money, and she took the ticket again, writing on it, "Paid. — Harrington."

"Is this formality necessary, my lady?"

"Yes; or else they would ask you for the money at the doors."

I did not think it necessary to say anything about my connection with the lady of Soho Square.

While Lady Harrington was making up a rubber at whist, she asked me if I had any other letters for ladies.

"Yes," said I, "I have one which I intend to present tomorrow. It is a singular letter, being merely a portrait."

"Have you got it about you?"

"Yes, my lady."

"May I see it?"

"Certainly. Here it is."

"It is the Duchess of Northumberland. We will go and give it her."

"With pleasure."

"Just wait till they have marked the game."

Lord Percy had given me this portrait as a letter of introduction to his mother.

"My dear duchess," said Lady Harrington, "here is a letter of introduction which this gentleman begs to present to you."

"I know, it is M. de Seingalt. My son has written to me about him. I am delighted to see you, Chevalier, and I hope you will come and see me. I receive thrice a week."

"Will your ladyship allow me to present my valuable letter in person?"

"Certainly. You are right."

I played a rubber of whist for very small stakes, and lost fifteen guineas, which I paid on the spot. Directly afterwards, Lady Harrington took me apart, and gave me a lesson which I deem worthy of record.

"You paid in gold," said she; "I suppose you had no bank-notes about you?"

"Yes, my lady, I have notes for fifty and a hundred pounds."

"Then you must change one of them or wait till another time to pay, for in England to pay in gold is a solecism only pardonable in a stranger. Perhaps you noticed that the lady smiled?"

"Yes; who is she?"

"Lady Coventry, sister of the Duchess of Hamilton."

"Ought I to apologise?"

"Not at all, the offence is not one of those which require an apology. She must have been more surprised than offended, for she made fifteen shillings by your paying her in gold."

I was vexed by this small mischance, for Lady Coventry was an exquisitely beautiful brunette. I comforted myself, however, without much trouble.

The same day I made the acquaintance of Lord Hervey, the nobleman who conquered Havana, a pleasant and intelligent person. He had married Miss Chudleigh, but the marriage was annulled. This celebrated Miss Chudleigh was maid of honour to the Princess Dowager of Wales, and afterwards became Duchess of Kingston. As her history is well known I shall say something more of her in due course. I went home well enough pleased with my day's work.

The next day I began dining at home, and found my cook very satisfactory; for, besides the usual English dishes, he was acquainted with the French system of cooking, and did fricandeaus, cutlets, ragouts, and, above all, the excellent French soup, which is one of the principal glories of France.

My table and my house were not enough for my happiness. I was alone, and the reader will understand by this that Nature had not meant me for a hermit. I had neither a mistress nor a friend, and at London one may invite a man to dinner at a tavern where he pays for himself, but not to one's own table. One day I was invited by a younger son of the Duke of Bedford

to eat oysters and drink a bottle of champagne. I accepted the invitation, and he ordered the oysters and the champagne, but we drank two bottles, and he made me pay half the price of the second bottle. Such are manners on the other side of the Channel. People laughed in my face when I said that I did not care to dine at a tavern as I could not get any soup.

"Are you ill?" they said. "Soup is only fit for invalids."

The Englishman is entirely carnivorous. He eats very little bread, and calls himself economical because he spares himself the expense of soup and dessert, which circumstance made me remark that an English dinner is like eternity; it has no beginning and no end. Soup is considered very extravagant, as the very servants refuse to eat the meat from which it has been made. They say it is only fit to give to dogs. The salt beef which they use is certainly excellent. I cannot say the same for their beer, which was so bitter that I could not drink it. However, I could not be expected to like beer after the excellent French wines with which the wine merchant supplied me, certainly at a very heavy cost.

I had been a week in my new home without seeing Martinelli. He came on a Monday morning, and I asked him to dine with me. He told me that he had to go to the Museum, and my curiosity to see the famous collection which is such an honour to England made me accompany him. It was there that I made the acquaintance of Dr. Mati, of whom I shall speak in due course.

At dinner Martinelli made himself extremely pleasant. He had a profound knowledge of the English manners and customs which it behoved me to know if I wished to get on. I happened to speak of the impoliteness of which I had been guilty in paying a gaming debt in gold instead of paper, and on this text he preached me a sermon on the national prosperity, demonstrating that the preference given to paper shows the confidence which is felt in the Bank, which may or may not be misplaced, but which is certainly a source of wealth. This confidence might be destroyed by a too large issue of paper money, and if that ever took place by reason of a protracted or unfortunate war, bankruptcy would be inevitable, and no one could calculate the final results.

After a long discussion on politics, national manners, literature,

in which subjects Martinelli shone, we went to Drury Lane Theatre, where I had a specimen of the rough insular manners. By some accident or other the company could not give the piece that had been announced, and the audience were in a tumult. Garrick, the celebrated actor, who was buried twenty years later in Westminister Abbey, came forward and tried in vain to restore order. He was obliged to retire behind the curtain. Then the king, the queen, and all the fashionables left the theatre, and in less than an hour the house was gutted, till nothing but the bare walls were left.

After this destruction, which went on without any authority interposing, the mad populace rushed to the taverns to consume gin and beer. In a fortnight the theatre was refitted and the piece announced again, and when Garrick appeared before the curtain to implore the indulgence of the house, a voice from the pit shouted, "On your knees." A thousand voices took up the cry "On your knees," and the English Roscius was obliged to kneel down and beg forgiveness. Then came a thunder of applause, and everything was over. Such are the English, and, above all, the Londoners. They hoot the king and the royal family when they appear in public, and the consequence is, that they are never seen, save on great occasions, when order is kept by hundreds of constables.

One day, as I was walking by myself, I saw Sir Augustus Hervey, whose acquaintance I had made, speaking to a gentleman, whom he left to come to me. I asked him whom he had been speaking to.

"That's the brother of Earl Ferrers," said he, "who was hanged a couple of months ago for murdering one of his people."

"And you speak to his brother?"

"Why shouldn't I?"

"Is he not dishonoured by the execution of his relative?"

"Dishonoured! Certainly not; even his brother was not dishonoured. He broke the law, but he paid for it with his life, and owed society nothing more. He's a man of honour, who played high and lost; that's all. I don't know that there is any penalty in the statute book which dishonours the culprit; that would be tyrannical, and we would not bear it. I may break any law I like, so long as I am willing to pay the penalty. It is only a dishonour when the criminal tries to escape punishment by base or cowardly actions."

"How do you mean?"

"To ask for the royal mercy, to beg forgiveness of the people, and the like."

"How about escaping from justice?"

"That is no dishonour, for to fly is an act of courage; it continues the defiance of the law, and if the law cannot exact obedience, so much the worse for it. It is an honour for you to have escaped from the tyranny of your magistrates; your flight from The Leads was a virtuous action. In such cases man fights with death and flees from it. *Vir fugiens denuo pugnabit.*"

"What do you think of highway robbers, then?"

"I detest them as wretches dangerous to society, but I pity them when I reflect that they are always riding towards the gallows. You go out in a coach to pay a visit to a friend three or four miles out of London. A determined and agile-looking fellow springs upon you with his pistol in his hand, and says, 'Your money or your life.' What would you do in such a case?"

"If I had a pistol handy I would blow out his brains, and if not I would give him my purse and call him a scoundrelly assassin."

"You would be wrong in both cases. If you killed him, you would be hanged, for you have no right to take the law into your own hands; and if you called him an assassin, he would tell you that he was no assassin as he attacked you openly and gave you a free choice. Nay, he is generous, for he might kill you and take your money as well. You might, indeed, tell him he has an evil trade, and he would tell you that you were right, and that he would try to avoid the gallows as long as possible. He would then thank you and advise you never to drive out of London without being accompanied by a mounted servant, as then no robber would dare to attack you. We English always carry two purses on our journeys; a small one for the robbers and a large one for ourselves."

What answer could I make to such arguments, based as they were upon the national manners? England is a rich sea, but strewn with reefs, and those who voyage there would do well to take precautions. Sir Augustus Hervey's discourse gave me great pleasure.

Going from one topic to another, as is always the way with a desultory conversation, Sir Augustus deplored the fate of an

unhappy Englishman who had absconded to France with seventy thousand pounds, and had been brought back to London, and was to be hanged.

"How could that be?" I asked.

"The Crown asked the Duc de Nivernois to extradite him, and Louis XV. granted the request to make England assent to some articles of the peace. It was an act unworthy of a king, for it violates the right of nations. It is true that the man is a wretch, but that has nothing to do with the principle of the thing."

"Of course they have got back the seventy thousand pounds?"

"Not a shilling of it."

"How was that?"

"Because no money was found on him. He has most likely left his little fortune to his wife, who can marry again as she is still young and pretty."

"I wonder the police have not been after her."

"Such a thing is never thought of. What could they do? It's not likely that she would confess that her husband left her the stolen money. The law says robbers shall be hanged, but it says nothing about what they have stolen, as they are supposed to have made away with it. Then if we had to take into account the thieves who had kept their theft and thieves who had spent it, we should have to make two sets of laws, and make all manner of allowances; the end of it would be inextricable confusion. It seems to us Englishmen that it would not be just to ordain two punishments for theft. The robber becomes the owner of what he has stolen; true, he got it by violence, but it is none the less his, for he can do what he likes with it. That being the case, everyone should be careful to keep what he has, since he knows that once stolen he will never see it again. I have taken Havana from Spain: this was robbery on a large scale."

He talked at once like a philosopher and a faithful subject of his king.

Engaged in this discussion we walked towards the Duchess of Northumberland's, where I made the acquaintance of Lady Rochefort, whose husband had just been appointed Spanish ambassador. This lady's gallantries were innumerable, and furnished a fresh topic of conversation every day.

The day before the assembly at Soho Square Martinelli dined

with me, and told me that Madame Cornelis was heavily in debt, and dared not go out except on Sundays, when debtors are privileged.

"The enormous and unnecessary expense which she puts herself to," said he, "will soon bring her to ruin. She owes four times the amount of her assets, even counting in the house, which is a doubtful item, as it is the subject of litigation."

This news only distressed me for her children's sake, for I thought that she herself well deserved such a fate.

I went in due time to the assembly, and the secretary at the door wrote down my name as I handed in my ticket. When Madame Cornelis saw me she said she was delighted I had come in by ticket, and that she had had some doubts as to whether I would come.

"You might have spared yourself the trouble of doubting," said I, "for after hearing that I had been to Court you might have guessed that a matter of two guineas would not have kept me away. I am sorry for our old friendship's sake that I did not pay the money to you; you might have known that I would not condescend to be present in the modest manner you indicated."

This address, delivered with an ironical accent, embarrassed Madame Cornelis, but Lady Harrington, a great supporter of hers, came to her rescue.

"I have a number of guineas to hand over to you, my dear Cornelis, and amongst others two from M. de Seingalt, who, I fancy, is an old friend of yours. Nevertheless, I did not dare to tell him so," she added, with a sly glance in my direction.

"Why not, my lady? I have known Madame Cornelis for many years."

"I should think you have," she answered, laughing, "and I congratulate you both. I suppose you know the delightful Miss Sophie too, Chevalier?"

"Certainly, my lady, whoso knows the mother knows the daughter."

"Quite so, quite so."

Sophie was standing by, and after kissing her fondly Lady Harrington said:

"If you love yourself, you ought to love her, for she is the image of you."

"Yes, it is a freak of nature."

"I think there is something more than a freak in this instance."

With these words the lady took Sophie's hand, and leaning on my arm she led us through the crowd, and I had to bear in silence the remarks of everyone.

"There is Madame Cornelis's husband."

"That must be M. Cornelis."

"Oh! there can be no doubt about it."

"No, no," said Lady Harrington, "you are all quite wrong."

I got tired of these remarks, which were all founded on the remarkable likeness between myself and Sophie. I wanted Lady Harrington to let the child go, but she was too much amused to do so.

"Stay by me," she said, "if you want to know the names of the guests." She sat down, making me sit on one side and Sophie on the other.

Madame Cornelis then made her appearance, and everyone asked her the same questions, and made the same remarks about me. She said bravely that I was her best and her oldest friend, and that the likeness between me and her daughter might possibly be capable of explanation. Everyone laughed and said it was very natural that it should be so. To change the subject, Madame Cornelis remarked that Sophie had learnt the minuet and danced it admirably.

"Then fetch a violin player," said Lady Harrington, "that we may have the pleasure of witnessing the young artist's performance."

The ball had not yet begun, and as soon as the violinist appeared, I stepped forward and danced with Sophie, to the delight of the select circle of spectators.

The ball lasted all night without ceasing, as the company ate by relays, and at all times and hours; the waste and prodigality were worthy of a prince's palace. I made the acquaintance of all the nobility and the royal family, for they were all there, with the exception of the king and queen, and the Prince of Wales. Madame Cornelis must have received more than twelve hundred guineas, but the outlay was enormous, without any control or safeguard against thefts which must have been perpetrated on all sides. She tried to introduce her son to everybody, but the poor lad looked like a victim, and did nothing but make profound bows. I pitied him from my heart.

As soon as I got home I went to bed and spent the whole of the next day there. The day after I went to the Staven Tavern, as I had been told that the prettiest girls in London resorted to it. Lord Pembroke gave me this piece of information; he went there very frequently himself. When I got to the tavern I asked for a private room, and the landlord, perceiving that I did not know English, accosted me in French, and came to keep me company. I was astonished at his grave and reverend manner of speaking, and did not like to tell him that I wanted to dine with a pretty Englishwoman. At last, however, I summoned up courage to say, with a great deal of circumlocution, that I did not know whether Lord Pembroke had deceived me in informing me that I should find the prettiest girls in London at his house.

"No, sir," said he, "my lord has not deceived you, and you can have as many as you like."

"That's what I came for."

He called out some name, and, a tidy-looking lad making his appearance, he told him to get me a wench just as though he were ordering a bottle of champagne. The lad went out, and presently a girl of herculean proportions entered.

"Sir," said I, "I don't like the looks of this girl."

"Give her a shilling and send her away. We don't trouble ourselves about ceremonies in London."

This put me at my ease, so I paid my shilling and called for a prettier wench. The second was worse than the first, and I sent her away, and ten others after her, while I could see that my fastidiousness amused the landlord immensely.

"I'll see no more girls," said I at last, "let me have a good dinner. I think the procurer must have been making game of me for the sake of the shillings."

"It's very likely; indeed it often happens so when a gentleman does not give the name and address of the wench he wants."

In the evening as I was walking in St. James's Park, I remembered it was a Ranelagh evening, and wishing to see the place I took a coach and drove there, intending to amuse myself till midnight, and to find a beauty to my taste.

I was pleased with the rotunda. I had some tea, I danced some minuets, but I made no acquaintances; and although I saw several pretty women, I did not dare to attack any of them. I got tired, and as it was near midnight I went out thinking to

find my coach, for which I had not paid, still there, but it was gone, and I did not know what to do. An extremely pretty woman who was waiting for her carriage in the doorway, noticed my distress, and said that if I lived anywhere near Whitehall, she could take me home. I thanked her gratefully, and told her where I lived. Her carriage came up, her man opened the door, and she stepped in on my arm, telling me to sit beside her, and to stop the carriage when it got to my house.

As soon as we were in the carriage, I burst out into expressions of gratitude; and after telling her my name I expressed my regret at not having seen her at Soho Square.

"I was not in London," she replied, "I returned from Bath to-day."

I apostrophised my happiness in having met her. I covered her hands with kisses, and dared to kiss her on the cheek; and finding that she smiled graciously, I fastened my lips on hers, and before long had given her an unequivocal mark of the ardour with which she inspired me.

She took my attentions so easily that I flattered myself I had not displeased her, and I begged her to tell me where I could call on her and pay my court while I remained in London, but she replied:

"We shall see each other again; we must be careful."

I swore secrecy, and urged her no more. Directly after the carriage stopped, I kissed her hand and was set down at my door, well pleased with the ride home.

For a fortnight I saw nothing of her, but I met her again in a house where Lady Harrington had told me to present myself, giving her name. It was Lady Betty German's, and I found her out, but was asked to sit down and wait as she would be in soon. I was pleasantly surprised to find my fair friend of Ranelagh in the room, reading a newspaper. I conceived the idea of asking her to introduce me to Lady Betty, so I went up to her and proffered my request, but she replied politely that she could not do so not having the honour to know my name.

"I have told you my name, madam. Do you not remember me?"

"I remember you perfectly, but a piece of folly is not a title of acquaintance."

I was dumbfounded at the extraordinary reply, while the

lady calmly returned to her newspaper, and did not speak another word till the arrival of Lady Betty.

The fair philosopher talked for two hours without giving the least sign of knowing who I was, although she answered me with great politeness whenever I ventured to address her. She turned out to be a lady of high birth and of great reputation.

Happening to call on Martinelli, I asked him who was the pretty girl who was kissing her hands to me from the house opposite. I was pleasantly surprised to hear that she was a dancer named Binetti. Four years ago she had done me a great service at Stuttgart, but I did not know she was in London. I took leave of Martinelli to go and see her, and did so all the more eagerly when I heard that she had parted from her husband, though they were obliged to dance together at the Haymarket.

She received me with open arms, telling me that she had recognised me directly.

"I am surprised, my dear elder," said she, "to see you in London."

She called me "elder" because I was the oldest of her friends.

"Nor did I know that you were here. I came to town after the close of the opera. How is it that you are not living with your husband?"

"Because he games, loses, and despoils me of all I possess. Besides, a woman of my condition, if she be married, cannot hope that a rich lover will come and see her, while if she be alone she can receive visits without any constraint."

"I shouldn't have thought they would be afraid of Binetti; he used to be far from jealous."

"Nor is he jealous now; but you must know that there is an English law which allows the husband to arrest his wife and her lover if he find them *in flagrante delicto*. He only wants two witnesses, and it is enough that they are sitting together on a bed. The lover is forced to pay to the husband the half of all he possesses. Several rich Englishmen have been caught in this way, and now they are very shy of visiting married women, especially Italians."

"So you have much to be thankful for. You enjoy perfect liberty, can receive any visitors you like, and are in a fair way to make a fortune."

"Alas! my dear friend, you do not know all. When he has information from his spies that I have had a visitor, he comes to me in a sedan-chair at night, and threatens to turn me out into the street if I do not give him all the money I have. He is a terrible rascal!"

I left the poor woman, after giving her my address, and telling her to come and dine with me whenever she liked. She had given me a lesson on the subject of visiting ladies. England has very good laws, but most of them are capable of abuse. The oath which jurymen have to take to execute them to the letter has caused several to be interpreted in a manner absolutely contrary to the intention of the legislators, thus placing the judges in a difficult predicament. Thus new laws have constantly to be made, and new glosses to explain the old ones.

My Lord Pembroke, seeing me at my window, came in, and after examining my house, including the kitchen, where the cook was at work, told me that there was not a nobleman in town who had such a well-furnished and comfortable house. He made a calculation, and told me that if I wanted to entertain my friends I should require three hundred pounds a month. "You can't live here," said he, "without a pretty girl, and those who know that you keep bachelor's hall are of opinion that you are very wise, and will save a great deal of useless expense."

"Do you keep a girl, my lord?"

"No, for I am unfortunate enough to be disgusted with a woman after I have had her for a day."

"Then you require a fresh one every day?"

"Yes, and without being as comfortable as you I spend four times as much. You must know that I live in London like a stranger. I never dine at my own house. I wonder at your dining alone."

"I can't speak English. I like soup and good wine, and that is enough to keep me from your taverns."

"I expect so, with your French tastes."

"You will confess that they are not bad tastes."

"You are right, for, good Englishman as I am, I get on very well in Paris."

He burst out laughing when I told him how I had dispatched a score of wenches at the Staven Tavern, and that my disappointment was due to him.

"I did not tell you what names to send for, and I was wrong."

"Yes, you ought to have told me."

"But even if I did they wouldn't have come, for they are not at the orders of the procuress. If you will promise to pay them as I do, I will give you some tickets which will make them come."

"Can I have them here?"

"Just as you like."

"That will be most convenient for me. Write out the tickets and let them know French if you can."

"That's the difficulty; the prettiest only speak English."

"Never mind, we shall understand each other well enough for the purpose I dare say."

He wrote several tickets for four and six guineas each; but one was marked twelve guineas.

"She is doubly pretty, is she?" said I.

"Not exactly, but she has cuckolded a duke of Great Britain who keeps her, and only uses her once or twice a month."

"Would you do me the honour of testing the skill of my cook?"

"Certainly, but I can't make an appointment."

"And supposing I am out."

"I'll go to the tavern."

Having nothing better to do I sent Jarbe to one of the four-guinea wenches, telling him to advise her that she would dine with me. She came. She did not attract me sufficiently to make me attempt more than some slight toying. She went away well pleased with her four guineas, which she had done nothing to earn. Another wench, also at four guineas, supped with me the following evening. She had been very pretty, and, indeed, was so still, but she was too melancholy and quiet for my taste, and I could not make up my mind to tell her to undress.

The third day, not feeling inclined to try another ticket, I went to Covent Garden, and on meeting an attractive young person I accosted her in French, and asked her if she would sup with me.

"How much will you give me at dessert?"

"Three guineas."

"Come along."

After the play I ordered a good supper for two, and she

displayed an appetite after mine own heart. When we had supped I asked for her name and address, and I was astonished to find that she was one of the girls whom Lord Pembroke had assessed at six guineas. I concluded that it was best to do one's own business, or, at any rate, not to employ noblemen as agents. As to the other tickets, they procured me but little pleasure. The twelve-guinea one, which I had reserved for the last, as a choice morsel, pleased me the least of all, and I did not care to cuckold the noble duke who kept her.

Lord Pembroke was young, handsome, rich, and full of wit. I went to see him one day, and found him just getting out of bed. He said he would walk with me and told his valet to shave him.

"But," said I, "there's not a trace of beard on your face."

"There never is," said he, "I get myself shaved three times a day."

"Three times."

"Yes, when I change my shirt I wash my hands; when I wash my hands I have to wash my face, and the proper way to wash a man's face is with a razor."

"When do you make these three ablutions?"

"When I get up, when I dress for dinner, and when I go to bed, for I should not like the woman who is sleeping with me to feel my beard."

We had a short walk together, and then I left him as I had some writing to do. As we parted, he asked me if I dined at home. I replied in the affirmative, and foreseeing that he intended dining with me I warned my cook to serve us well, though I did not let him know that I expected a nobleman to dinner. Vanity has more than one string to its bow.

I had scarcely got home when Madame Binetti came in, and said that if she were not in the way, she would be glad to dine with me. I gave her a warm welcome, and she said I was really doing her a great service, as her husband would suffer the torments of hell in trying to find out with whom she had dined.

This woman still pleased; and though she was thirty-five, nobody would have taken her for more than twenty-five. Her appearance was in every way pleasing. Her lips were of the hue of the rose, disclosing two exquisite rows of teeth. A fine complexion, splendid eyes, and a forehead where Innocence might

have been well enthroned, all this made an exquisite picture. If you add to this, that her breast was of the rarest proportions, you will understand that more fastidious tastes than mine would have been satisfied with her.

She had not been in my house for half an hour when Lord Pembroke came in. They both uttered an exclamation, and the nobleman told me that he had been in love with her for the last six months; that he had written ardent letters to her of which she had taken no notice.

"I never would have anything to do with him," said she, "because he is the greatest profligate in all England; and it's a pity," she added, "because he is a kind-hearted nobleman."

This explanation was followed by a score of kisses, and I saw that they were agreed.

We had a choice dinner in the French style, and Lord Pembroke swore he had not eaten so good a dinner for the last year.

"I am sorry for you," he said, "when I think of you being alone every day."

Madame Binetti was as much a *gourmet* as the Englishman, and when we rose from table we felt inclined to pass from the worship of Comus to that of Venus; but the lady was too experienced to give the Englishman anything more than a few trifling kisses.

I busied myself in turning over the leaves of some books I had brought the day before, and left them together to their heart's content; but to prevent them asking me to give them another dinner I said that I hoped chance would bring about such another meeting on another occasion.

At six o'clock, after my guests had left me, I dressed and went to Vauxhall, where I met a French officer named Malingan, to whom I had given some money at Aix-la-Chapelle. He said he would like to speak to me, so I gave him my name and address. I also met a well-known character, the Chevalier Goudar, who talked to me about gaming and women. Malingan introduced me to an individual who he said might be very useful to me in London. He was a man of forty, and styled himself son of the late Theodore, the pretender to the throne of Corsica, who had died miserably in London fourteen years before, after having been imprisoned for debt for seven years. I should have done better if I had never gone to Vauxhall that evening.

The entrance-fee at Vauxhall was half the sum charged at Ranelagh, but in spite of that the amusements were of the most varied kinds. There was good fare, music, walks in solitary alleys, thousands of lamps, and a crowd of London beauties, both high and low.

In the midst of all these pleasures I was dull, because I had no girl to share my abode or my good table, and make it dear to me. I had been in London for six weeks; and in no other place had I been alone for so long.

My house seemed intended for keeping a mistress with all decency, and as I had the virtue of constancy a mistress was all I wanted to make me happy. But how was I to find a woman who should be the equal of those women I had loved before? I had already seen half a hundred of girls whom the town pronounced to be pretty, and who did not strike me as even passable. I thought the matter over continually, and at last an odd idea struck me.

I called the old housekeeper, and told her by the servant, who acted as my interpreter, that I wanted to let the second or third floor for the sake of company; and although I was at perfect liberty to do what I liked with the house, I would give her half a guinea a week extra. Forthwith I ordered her to affix the following bill to the window: —

Second or third floor to be let, furnished, to a young lady speaking English and French, who receives no visitors, either by day or night.

The old Englishwoman, who had seen something of the world, began to laugh so violently when the document was translated to her that I thought she would have choked.

"What are you laughing at, my worthy woman?"

"Because this notice is a laughing matter."

"I suppose you think I shall have no applications?"

"Not at all, the doorstep will be crowded from morn to night, but I shall leave it all to Fanny. Only tell me how much to ask."

"I will arrange about the rent in my interview with the young lady. I don't think I shall have so many inquiries, for the young lady is to speak French and English, and also to be respectable. She must not receive any visits, not even from her father and mother, if she has them."

"But there will be a mob in front of the house reading the notice."

"All the better. Nothing is the worse for being a little odd."

It happened just as the old woman had foretold; as soon as the notice was up, everybody stopped to read it, made various comments, and passed on. On the second day after it was up, my Negro told me that my notice was printed in full in the *St. James's Chronicle,* with some amusing remarks. I had the paper brought up to me, and Fanny translated it. It ran as follows:

"The landlord of the second and third floors probably occupies the first floor himself. He must be a man of the world and of good taste, for he wants a young and pretty lodger; and as he forbids her to receive visits, he will have to keep her company himself."

He added:

"The landlord should take care lest he become his own dupe, for it is very likely that the pretty lodger would only take the room to sleep in, and possibly only to sleep in now and then; and if she chose she would have a perfect right to refuse to receive the proprietor's visits."

These sensible remarks delighted me, for after reading them I felt forewarned.

Such matters as these give their chief interest to the English newspapers. They are allowed to gossip about everything, and the writers have the knack of making the merest trifles seem amusing. Happy is the nation where anything may be written and anything said!

Lord Pembroke was the first to come and congratulate me on my idea, and he was succeeded by Martinelli; but he expressed some fears as to the possible consequences, "for," said he, "there are plenty of women in London who would come and lodge with you to be your ruin."

"In that case," I answered, "it would be a case of Greek meeting Greek; however, we shall see. If I am taken in, people will have the fullest right to laugh at me, for I have been warned."

I will not trouble my readers with an account of the hundred women who came in the first ten days, whom I refused on one pretext or another, though some of them were not wanting in grace and beauty. But one day, when I was at dinner, I received a visit from a girl of from twenty to twenty-four years, simply but elegantly dressed; her features were sweet and

gracious, though somewhat grave, her complexion pale, and her hair black. She gave me a bow which I had to rise to return, and as I remained standing she politely begged me not to put myself out, but to continue my dinner. I begged her to be seated and to take dessert, but she refused with an air of modesty which delighted me.

This fair lady said, not in French, but in Italian worthy of a Siennese, its purity was so perfect, that she hoped I would let her have a room on the third floor, and that she would gladly submit to all my conditions.

"You may only make use of one room if you like, but all the floor will belong to you."

"Although the notice says the rooms will be let cheaply, I shall not be able to afford more than one room. Two shillings a week is all I can spend."

"That's exactly what I want for the whole suite of rooms; so you can use them all. My maid will wait on you, get you whatever food you may require, and wash your linen as well. You can also employ her to do your commissions, so that you need not go out for trifles."

"Then I will dismiss my maid," she said; "she robs me of little, it is true, but still too much for my small means. I will tell your maid what food to buy for me every day, and she shall have six sols a week for her pains."

"That will be ample. I should advise you to apply to my cook's wife, who will get your dinner and supper for you as cheaply as you could buy it."

"I hardly think so, for I am ashamed to tell you how little I spend."

"Even if you only spend two sols a day, she will give you two sols' worth. All the same I advise you to be content with what you get from the kitchen, without troubling about the price, for I usually have provision made for four, though I dine alone, and the rest is the cook's perquisite. I merely advise you to the best of my ability, and I hope you will not be offended at my interest in your welfare."

"Really, sir, you are too generous."

"Wait a moment, and you will see how everything will be settled comfortably."

I told Clairmont to order up the maid and the cook's wife, and I said to the latter:

"For how much could you provide dinner and supper for this young lady, who is not rich, and only wants to eat to live?"

"I can do it very cheaply; for you usually eat alone, and have enough for four."

"Very good; then I hope you will treat her very well for the sum she gives you."

"I can only afford five sols a day."

"That will do nicely."

I gave orders that the bill should be taken down directly, and that the young lady's room should be made comfortable. When the maid and the cook's wife had left the room, the young lady told me that she should only go out on Sundays to hear mass at the Bavarian ambassador's chapel, and once a month to a person who gave her three guineas to support her.

"You can go out when you like," said I, "and without rendering an account to anybody of your movements."

She begged me not to introduce anyone to her, and to tell the porter to deny her to anyone who might come to the door to make inquiries. I promised that her wishes should be respected, and she went away saying that she was going for her trunk.

I immediately ordered my household to treat her with the utmost respect. The old housekeeper told me that she had paid the first week in advance, taking a receipt, and had gone, as she had come, in a sedan-chair. Then the worthy old woman made free to tell me to be on my guard.

"Against what? If I fall in love with her, so much the better; that is just what I want. What name did she give you?"

"Mistress Pauline. She was quite pale when she came and she went away covered with blushes."

CHAPTER XVIII

The Charpillon

THE romantic story of Pauline, who turns out to be a Portuguese lady of very high degree and whom a mysterious fate tears from his arms at the height of their felicity, under circumstances similar to those which brought about the parting with Henriette, belongs too obviously to the category of the interpolated romance, which had become a popular device of the novelist of those days, to have any biographical value. Artistically its purpose here would seem to be once more that of contrasting the romantic love-idyll with the crude verities of a Casanovian existence. At the same time it is the swan-song of the romantic lover whose rôle in the Memoirs is now over.[1] *For Nemesis in the person of Mdlle. Charpillon is already drawing near.*

[1]*As if to forestall the reader's making the remark for himself, Casanova points out the analogy between the two episodes:*

The analogy between my parting with Pauline and my parting with Henriette fifteen years before, was exceedingly striking; the two women were of very similar character, and both were equally beautiful, though their beauty was of a different kind. Thus I fell madly in love with the second as with the first, both being equally intelligent. The fact that one had more talent and less prejudices than the other must have been an effect of their different educations. Pauline had the fine pride of her nation, her mind was of a serious cast, and her religion was more of an affair of the heart than the understanding. She was also a far more ardent mistress than Henriette. I was successful with both of them because I was rich, if I had been a poor man I should never have known either of them. I have half forgotten them, as everything is forgotten in time, but when I recall them to my memory I find that Henriette made the profounder impression on me, no doubt because I was twenty-five when I knew her, while I was thirty-seven in London.

The older I get, the more I feel the destructive effects of old age; and I regret bitterly that I could not discover the secret of remaining young and happy for ever. Vain regrets! We must finish as we began, helpless and devoid of sense.

Simultaneously with parting from Pauline and romance in general, the Memoirs give the coup de grâce, *to that other romantic, but not fictitious, person: the Marquise d'Urfé:*

The 1st of August was a fatal day for both of us. Pauline received a letter from Lisbon, which summoned her home without delay, and I had a letter from Paris announcing the death of Madame d'Urfé. Madame du Rumain told me that on the evidence of her maid the doctors had pronounced her

A Flemish officer, the man whom I had helped at Aix-la-Chapelle, had called on me several times, and had even dined three or four times with me. I reproached myself for not having been polite enough to return his call, and when we met in the street, and he reproached me for not having been to see him, I was obliged to blush. He had his wife and daughter with him, and some feeling of shame and a good deal of curiosity made me call on him.

When he saw me he threw his arms about my neck, calling me his preserver. I was obliged to receive all the compliments which knaves make to honest men when they hope to take them in. A few moments after, an old woman and a girl came in, and I was introduced as the Chevalier de Seingalt, of whom he had spoken so often. The girl, affecting surprise, said she had known a M. Casanova, who was very like me. I answered that Casanova was my name as well as Seingalt, but that I had not the happiness of recollecting her.

"My name was Anspergher when I saw you," she replied, "but now it is Charpillon; and considering that we only met once, and that I was only thirteen at the time, I do not wonder at your not recollecting me. I have been in London with my mother and aunts for the last four years."

"But where had I the pleasure of speaking to you?"

"At Paris."

"In what part of Paris?"

---

death to be due to an overdose of the liquid she called "The Panacea." She added that a will had been found which savoured of a lunatic asylum, for she had left all her wealth to the son or daughter that should be born of her, declaring that she was with child. I was to be the governor of the infant; this vexed me exceedingly, as I knew I should be the laughing-stock of Paris for a week at least. Her daughter, the Comtesse de Chatelet, had taken possession of all her real estate and of her pocket-book, which contained, to my surprise, four hundred thousand francs. It was a great shock for me, but the contents of the two letters Pauline had received was a greater blow.

What Casanova's reasons were for killing off his generous patron twelve years before her real death, which took place in 1775, we may not know, though we may surmise. It is probable that after the last hoax the lady's family brought her round to her senses. In this connection it is interesting to consult the curious series of letters written by Casanova's accomplice, the so-called Count Passano, alias Pogamas, denouncing the former to the Marquise. These letters, discovered in a provincial library near the ancestral home of the d'Urfé family, have been published by M. Samaran in his admirable work, already mentioned.

"In the Bazaar. You were with a charming lady, and you gave me these buckles" (she showed me them on her shoes), "and you also did me the honour to kiss me."

I recollected the circumstance, and the reader will remember that I was with Madame Baret, the fair stocking-seller.

"Now I remember you," said I; "but I do not recognise your aunt."

"This is the sister of the one you saw, but if you will take tea with us you will see her."

"Where do you live?"

"In Denmark Street, Soho."

The name Charpillon reminded me that I was the bearer of a letter for her, and drawing it from my pocket-book I gave it her, saying that the document ought to cement our acquaintance.

"What!" she exclaimed, "a letter from the dear ambassador Morosini. How delighted I am to have it! And you have actually been all these months in London without giving it me?"

"I confess I am to blame, but, as you see, the note has no address on it. I am grateful for the chance which has enabled me to discharge my commission to-day."

"Come and dine with us to-morrow."

"I cannot do so, as I am expecting Lord Pembroke to dinner."

"Will you be alone?"

"I expect so."

"I am glad to hear it; you will see my aunt and myself appearing on the scene."

"Here is my address; and I shall be delighted if you will come and see me."

She took the address, and I was surprised to see her smile as she read it.

"Then you are the Italian," she said, "who put up that notice that amused all the town?"

"I am."

"They say the joke cost you dear."

"Quite the reverse; it resulted in the greatest happiness."

"But now that the beloved object has left you, I suppose you are unhappy?"

"I am; but there are sorrows so sweet that they are almost joys."

"Nobody knows who she was, but I suppose you do?"

"Yes."

"Do you make a mystery of it?"

"Surely, and I would rather die than reveal it."

"Ask my aunt if I may take some rooms in your house; but I am afraid my mother would not let me."

"Why, do you want to lodge cheaply?"

"I don't want to lodge cheaply, but I should like to punish the audacious author of that notice."

"How would you punish me?"

"By making you fall in love with me, and then tormenting you. It would have amused me immensely."

"Then you think that you can inspire me with love, and at the same time form the dreadful plan of tyrannising over the victim of your charms. Such a project is monstrous, and, unhappily for us poor men, you do not look a monster. Nevertheless, I am obliged to you for your frankness, and I shall be on my guard."

"Then you must take care never to see me, or else all your efforts will be in vain."

As the Charpillon had laughed merrily through the whole of this dialogue, I took it all as a jest, but I could not help admiring her manner, which seemed made for the subjugation of men. But though I knew it not, the day I made that woman's acquaintance was a luckless one for me, as my readers will see.

It was towards the end of the month of September, 1763, when I met the Charpillon, and from that day I began to die. If the lines of ascent and declination are equal, now, on this first day of November, 1797, I have about four more years of life to reckon on, which will pass by swiftly, according to the axiom *Motus in fine velocior.*

The Charpillon, who was well known in London, and I believe is still alive, was one of those beauties in whom it is difficult to find any positive fault. Her hair was chestnut coloured, and astonishingly long and thick, her blue eyes were at once languorous and brilliant, her skin, faintly tinged with a rosy hue, was of a dazzling whiteness; she was tall for her age, and seemed likely to become as tall as Pauline. Her breast was perhaps a little small, but perfectly shaped, her hands were white and plump, her feet small, and her gait had something noble and

gracious. Her features were of that exquisite sensibility which gives so much charm to the fair sex, but nature had given her a beautiful body and a deformed soul. This siren had formed a design to wreck my happiness even before she knew me, and as if to add to her triumph she told me as much.

I left Malingan's house not like a man who, fond of the fair sex, is glad to have made the acquaintance of a beautiful woman, but in a state of stupefaction that the image of Pauline, which was always before me, was not strong enough to overcome the influence of a creature like the Charpillon, whom in my heart I could not help despising.

I calmed myself by saying that this strong impression was due to novelty, and by hoping that I should soon be disenchanted.

"She will have no charm," said I, "when I have once possessed her, and that will not be long in coming."

Perhaps the reader will think that I was too presumptuous, but why should I suppose that there would be any difficulty? She had asked me to dinner herself, she had surrendered herself entirely to Morosini, who was not the man to sigh for long at any woman's feet, and must have paid her, for he was not young enough nor handsome enough to inspire her with a fancy for him. Without counting my physical attractions, I had plenty of money, and I was not afraid of spending it; and so I thought I could count on an easy victory.

Pembroke had become an intimate friend of mine since my proceedings with regard to Schwerin. He admired my conduct in not making any claim on the general for half my loss. He had said we would make a pleasant day of it together, and when he saw that my table was laid for four he asked who the other guests were to be. He was extremely surprised when he heard that they were the Charpillon and her aunt, and that the girl had invited herself when she heard he was to dine with me.

"I once took a violent fancy for the little hussy," said he. "It was one evening when I was at Vauxhall, and I offered her twenty guineas if she would come and take a little walk with me in a dark alley. She said she would come if I gave her the money in advance, which I was fool enough to do. She went with me, but as soon as we were alone she ran away, and I could not catch her again, though I looked for her all the evening."

"You ought to have boxed her ears before everybody."

"I should have got into trouble, and people would have laughed at me besides. I preferred to despise her and the money too. Are you in love with her?"

"No; but I am curious, as you were."

"Take care! she will do all in her power to entrap you."

She came in and went up to my lord with the most perfect coolness, and began to chatter away to him without taking any notice of me. She laughed, joked, and reproached him for not having pursued her at Vauxhall. Her stratagem, she said, was only meant to excite him the more.

"Another time," she added, "I shall not escape you."

"Perhaps not, my dear, for another time I shall take care not to pay in advance."

"Oh, fie! you degrade yourself by talking about paying."

"I suppose I honour you."

"We never talk of such things."

Lord Pembroke laughed at her impertinences, while she made a vigorous assault on him, for his coolness and indifference piqued her.

She left soon after dinner, making me promise to dine with her the day after next.

I passed the next day with the amiable nobleman who initiated me into the mysteries of the English bagnio, an entertainment which I shall not describe, for it is well known to all who care to spend six guineas.

On the day appointed, my evil destiny made me go to the Charpillon's; the girl introduced me to her mother, whom I at once recollected, although she had aged and altered since I had seen her.

In the year 1759 a Genevan named Bolomé had persuaded me to sell her jewels to the extent of six thousand francs, and she had paid me in bills drawn by her and her two sisters on this Bolomé, but they were then known as Anspergher. The Genevan became bankrupt before the bills were due, and the three sisters disappeared. As may be imagined, I was surprised to find them in England, and especially to be introduced to them by the Charpillon, who, knowing nothing of the affair of the jewels, had not told them that Seingalt was the same as Casanova, whom they had cheated of six thousand francs.

"I am delighted to see you again," were the first words I addressed to her.

"I recollect you, sir; that rascal Bolomé . . ."

"We will discuss that subject another time. I see you are ill."

"I have been at death's door, but I am better now. My daughter did not tell me your proper name."

"Yes, she did. My name is Seingalt as well as Casanova. I was known by the latter name at Paris when I made your daughter's acquaintance, though I did not know then that she was your daughter."

Just then the grandmother, whose name was also Anspergher, came in with the two aunts, and a quarter of an hour later three men arrived, one of whom was the Chevalier Goudar, whom I had met at Paris. I did not know the others who were introduced to me under the names of Rostaing and Caumon. They were three friends of the household, whose business it was to bring in dupes.

Such was the infamous company in which I found myself, and though I took its measure directly, yet I did not make my escape, nor did I resolve never to go to the house again. I was fascinated; I thought I would be on my guard and be safe, and as I only wanted the daughter I looked on all else as of little moment.

At table I led the conversation, and thought that my prey would soon be within my grasp. The only thing which annoyed me was that the Charpillon, after apologising for having made me sit down to such a poor dinner, invited herself and all the company to sup with me on any day I liked to mention. I could make no opposition, so I begged her to name the day herself, and she did so, after a consultation with her worthy friends.

After coffee had been served we played four rubbers of whist, at which I lost, and at midnight I went away ill pleased with myself, but with no purpose of amendment, for this sorceress had got me in her toils.

All the same, I had the strength of mind to refrain from seeing her for two days, and on the third, which was the day appointed for the cursed supper, she and her aunt paid me a call at nine o'clock in the morning.

"I have come to breakfast with you, and to discuss a certain question," said she, in the most engaging manner.

"Will you tell me your business now, or after breakfast?"

"After breakfast; for we must be alone."

We had our breakfast, and then the aunt went into another room, and the Charpillon, after describing the monetary situation of the family, told me that it would be much relieved if her aunt could obtain a hundred guineas.

"What would she do with the money?"

"She would make the Balm of Life, of which she possesses the secret, and no doubt she would make her fortune, too."

She then began to dilate on the marvellous properties of the balm, on its probable success in a town like London, and on the benefits which would accrue to myself, for of course I should share in the profits. She added that her mother and aunt would give me a written promise to repay the money in the course of six years.

"I will give you a decided answer after supper."

I then began to caress her, but it was all in vain. She made her escape and ran to her aunt, while I followed her, feeling obliged to laugh as she did. She gave me her hand, and said:

"Farewell, till this evening."

When they were gone, I reflected over what had passed and thought this first scene of no bad augury. I saw that I should get nothing out of her without spending a hundred guineas, and I determined not to attempt to bargain, but I would let her understand that she must make up her mind not to play prude. The game was in my hands, and all I had to do was to take care not to be duped.

In the evening the company arrived, and the girl asked me to hold a bank till supper was ready ; but I declined, with a burst of laughter that seemed to puzzle her.

"At least, let us have a game of whist," said she.

"It seems to me," I answered, "that you don't feel very anxious to hear my reply."

"You have made up your mind, I suppose?"

"I have, follow me."

She followed me into an adjoining room, and after she had seated herself on a sofa, I told her that the hundred guineas were at her disposal.

"Then please to give the money to my aunt, otherwise these gentlemen might think I got it from you by some improper means."

"I will do so."

I tried to get possession of her, but in vain; and I ceased my endeavours when she said:

"You will get nothing from me either by money or violence; but you can hope for all when I find you really nice and quiet."

I re-entered the drawing-room, and feeling my blood boiling I began to play to quiet myself. She was as gay as ever, but her gaiety tired me. At supper I had her on my right hand, but the hundred impertinences which, under other circumstances, would have amused me, only wearied me, after the two rebuffs I had received from her.

After supper, just as they were going, she took me aside, and told me that if I wanted to hand over the hundred guineas she would tell her aunt to go with me into the next room.

"As documents have to be executed," I replied, "it will take some time; we will talk of it again."

"Won't you fix the time?"

I drew out my purse full of gold, and showed it her, saying:

"The time depends entirely on you."

When my hateful guests were gone, I began to reflect, and came to the conclusion that this young adventuress had determined to plunder me without giving me anything in return. I determined to have nothing more to do with her, but I could not get her beauty out of my mind.

I felt I wanted some distraction, something that would give me new aims and make me forget her. With this idea I went to see my daughter, taking with me an immense bag of sweets.

As soon as I was in the midst of the little flock, the delight became general, Sophie distributing the sweetmeats to her friends, who received them gratefully.

I spent a happy day, and for a week or two I paid several visits to Harwich. The mistress treated me with the utmost politeness and my daughter with boundless affection, always calling me "dear papa."

In less than three weeks I congratulated myself on having forgotten the Charpillon, and on having replaced her by innocent amours, though one of my daughter's schoolmates pleased me rather too much for my peace of mind.

Such was my condition when one morning the favourite aunt of the Charpillon paid me a call, and said that they were all

mystified at not having seen me since the supper I had given them, especially herself, as her niece had given her to understand that I would furnish her with the means of making the Balm of Life.

"Certainly; I would have given you the hundred guineas if your niece had treated me as a friend, but she has refused me favours a vestal might have granted, and you must be aware that she is by no means a vestal."

"Don't mind my laughing. My niece is an innocent, giddy girl; she loves you, but she is afraid you have only a passing whim for her. She is in bed now with a bad cold, and if you will come and see her I am sure you will be satisfied."

These artful remarks, which had no doubt been prepared in advance, ought to have aroused all my scorn, but instead of that they awakened the most violent desires. I laughed in chorus with the old woman, and asked what would be the best time to call.

"Come now, and give one knock."

"Very good, then you may expect me shortly."

I congratulated myself on being on the verge of success, for after the explanation I had had with the aunt, and having, as I thought, a friend in her, I did not doubt that I should succeed.

I put on my great coat, and in less than a quarter of an hour I knocked at their door. The aunt opened to me, and said:

"Come back in a quarter of an hour; she has been ordered a bath, and is just going to take it."

"This is another imposture. You're as bad a liar as she is."

"You are cruel and unjust, and if you will promise to be discreet, I will take you up to the third floor, where she is bathing."

"Very good; take me." She went upstairs, I following on tiptoe, and pushed me into a room, and shut the door upon me. The Charpillon was in a huge bath, with her head towards the door, and the infernal coquette, pretending to think it was her aunt, did not move, and said:

"Give me the towels, aunt."

When she caught sight of me, or rather pretended to do so, she gave a shriek, huddled her limbs together, and said, with affected anger:

"Begone!"

"You needn't exert your voice, for I am not going to be duped."

"Begone!"

"Not so, give me a little time to collect myself."

"I tell you, go!"

"Calm yourself, and don't be afraid of my showing you any violence; that would suit your game too well."

"My aunt shall pay dearly for this."

"She will find me her friend. I won't touch you."

"Leave the room."

"I have told you I am not going, and that you need not fear."

She then, pretending kindliness, said:

"Please leave me; I will not fail to show my gratitude."

Seeing that she got nothing, and that I refrained from touching her, she turned her back to me to give me to understand that it was no pleasure to her to look at me.

The aunt came in and I went out without a word, well pleased to find myself despising a character wherein profit and loss usurped the place of feeling.

The aunt came to me as I was going out of the house, and after inquiring if I were satisfied begged me to come into the parlour.

"Yes," said I, "I am perfectly satisfied — to know you and your niece. Here is the reward."

With these words I drew a bank-note for a hundred pounds from my pocket-book, and was foolish enough to give it her, telling her that she could make her balm, and need not trouble to give me any document, as I knew it would be of no value. I had not the strength to go away without giving her anything, and the procuress was sharp enough to know it.

When I got home I reflected on what had happened, and pronounced myself the conqueror with great triumph. I felt well at ease, and felt sure that I should never set foot in that house again. There were seven of them altogether, including servants, and the need of subsisting made them do anything for a living; and when they found themselves obliged to make use of men, they summoned the three rascals I have named, who were equally dependent on them.

Five or six days afterwards, I met the little hussy at Vauxhall in company with Goudar. I avoided her at first, but she came up to me reproaching me for my rudeness. I replied coolly enough, but affecting not to notice my manner, she asked me to come into an arbour with her and take a cup of tea.

"No, thank you," I replied, "I prefer supper."

"Then I will take some too, and you will give it me, won't you, just to show that you bear no malice?"

I ordered supper for four and we sat down together as if we had been intimate friends.

Her charming conversation combined with her beauty gradually drew me under her charm, and as the drink began to exercise its influence over me, I proposed a turn in one of the dark walks, expressing a hope that I should fare better than Lord Pembroke. She said gently, and with an appearance of sincerity that deceived me, that she wanted to be mine, but by day and on the condition that I would come and see her every day.

"I will do so, but first give me one little proof of your love."

"Most certainly not."

I got up to pay the bill, and then I left without a word, refusing to take her home. I went home by myself and went to bed.

The first thought when I awoke was that I was glad she had not taken me at my word; I felt very strongly that it was to my interest to break off all connection between that creature and myself. I felt the strength of her influence over me, and that my only way was to keep away from her, or to renounce all pretension to the possession of her charms.

The latter plan seemed to me impossible, so I determined to adhere to the first; but the wretched woman had resolved to defeat all my plans. The manner in which she succeeded must have been the result of a council of the whole society.

A few days after the Vauxhall supper Goudar called on me, and began by congratulating me on my resolution not to visit the Ansperghers any more, "for," said he, "the girl would have made you more and more in love with her, and in the end she would have reduced you to beggary."

"You must think me a great fool. If I had found her kind I should have been grateful, but without squandering all my money; and if she had been cruel, instead of ridiculous, I might have given her what I have already given her every day, without reducing myself to beggary."

"I congratulate you; it shows that you are well off. But have you made up your mind not to see her again?"

"Certainly."

"Then you are not in love with her?"

"I have been in love, but I am so no longer; and in a few days she will have passed completely out of my memory. I had almost forgotten her when I met her with you at Vauxhall."

"You are not cured. The way to be cured of an amour does not lie in flight, when the two parties live in the same town. Meetings will happen, and all the trouble has to be taken over again."

"Then do you know a better way?"

"Certainly; you should satiate yourself. It is quite possible that the creature is not in love with you, but you are rich and she has nothing. You might have had her for so much, and you could have left her when you found her to be unworthy of your constancy. You must know what kind of woman she is."

"I should have tried this method gladly, but I found her out."

"You could have got the best of her, though, if you had gone to work in the proper way. You should never have paid in advance. I know everything."

"What do you mean?"

"I know she has cost you a hundred guineas, and that you have not won so much as a kiss from her. She boasts that she took you in, though you pride yourself on your craft."

"It was an act of charity towards her aunt."

"Yes, to make her Balm of Life; but you know if it had not been for the niece the aunt would never have had the money."

"Perhaps not, but how come you who are of their party to be talking to me in this fashion?"

"I swear to you I only speak out of friendship for you, and I will tell you how I came to make the acquaintance of the girl, her mother, her grandmother, and her two aunts, and then you will no longer consider me as of their party.

"Sixteen months ago I saw M. Morosini walking about Vauxhall by himself. He had just come to England to congratulate the king on his accession to the throne, on behalf of the Republic of Venice. I saw how enchanted he was with the London beauties, and I went up to him and told him that all these beauties were at his service. This made him laugh, and on my repeating that it was not a jest he pointed out one of the girls, and asked if she would be at his service. I did not know her, so I asked him to wait awhile, and I would bring him the information he

required. There was no time to be lost, and I could see that the girl was not a vestal virgin, so I went up to her and told her that the Venetian ambassador was amorous of her, and that I would take her to him if she would receive his visits. The aunt said that a nobleman of such an exalted rank could only bring honour to her niece. I took their address, and on my way back to the ambassador I met a friend of mine who is learned in such commodities, and after I had showed him the address he told me it was the Charpillon."

"And it was she?"

"It was. My friend told me she was a young Swiss girl who was not yet in the general market, but who would soon be there, as she was not rich, and had a numerous train to support.

"I rejoined the Venetian, and told him that his business was done, and asked him at what time I should introduce him the next day, warning him that as she had a mother and aunts she would not be alone.

"'I am glad to hear it,' said he, 'and also that she is not a common woman.' He gave me an appointment for the next day, and we parted.

"I told the ladies at what hour I should have the pleasure of introducing the great man to them, and after warning them that they must appear not to know him I went home.

"The following day I called on M. de Morosini, and took him to Denmark Street incognito. We spent an hour in conversation, and then went away without anything being settled. On the way back the ambassador told me that he should like to have the girl on conditions which he would give me in writing at his residence.

"These conditions were that she should live in a furnished house free of rent, without any companion, and without receiving any visitors. His excellency would give her fifty guineas a month and pay for supper whenever he came. He told me to get the house if his conditions were received. The mother was to sign the agreement.

"The ambassador was in a hurry, and in three days the agreement was signed; but I obtained a document from the mother promising to let me have the girl for one night as soon as the Venetian had gone; it was known he was only stopping in London for a year."

Goudar extracted the document in question from his pocket, and gave it me. I read it and re-read it with as much surprise as pleasure, and he then proceeded with his story.

"When the ambassador had gone, the Charpillon, finding herself at liberty once more, had Lord Baltimore, Lord Grosvenor, and M. de Saa, the Portuguese ambassador, in turn, but no titular lover. I insisted on having my night with her according to agreement, but both mother and daughter laughed at me when I spoke of it. I cannot arrest her, because she is a minor, but I will have the mother imprisoned on the first opportunity, and you will see how the town will laugh. Now you know why I go to their house; and I assure you you are wrong if you think I have any part in their councils. Nevertheless, I know they are discussing how they may catch you, and they will do so if you do not take care."

"Tell the mother that I have another hundred guineas at her service if she will let me have her daughter for a single night."

"Do you mean that?"

"Assuredly, but I am not going to pay in advance."

"That's the only way not to be duped. I shall be glad to execute your commission."

I kept the rogue to dinner, thinking he might be useful to me. He knew everything and everybody, and told me a number of amusing anecdotes. Although a good-for-nothing fellow, he had his merits.

He had written several works, which, though badly constructed, showed he was a man of some wit. He was then writing his "Chinese Spy," and every day he wrote five or six news-letters from the various coffee-houses he frequented. I wrote one or two letters for him, with which he was much pleased.

The next morning, what was my surprise to see the Charpillon, who said with an air that I should have taken for modesty in any other woman:

"I don't want you to give me any breakfast, I want an explanation, and to introduce Miss Lorenzi to you."

I bowed to her and to her companion, and then said:

"What explanation do you require?"

At this, Miss Lorenzi, whom I had never seen before, thought proper to leave us, and I told my man that I was not at home to anybody. I ordered breakfast to be served to the companion of the nymph, that she might not find the waiting tedious.

"Sir," said the Charpillon, "is it a fact that you charged the Chevalier Goudar to tell my mother that you would give a hundred guineas to spend the night with me?"

"No, not to spend a night with you, but after I had passed it. Isn't the price enough?"

"No jesting, sir, if you please. There is no question of bargaining; all I want to know is whether you think you have a right to insult me, and that I am going to bear it?"

"If you think yourself insulted, I may, perhaps, confess I was wrong; but I confess I did not think I should have to listen to any reproaches from you. Goudar is one of your intimate friends, and this is not the first proposal he has taken to you. I could not address you directly, as I know your arts only too well."

"I shall not pay any attention to your abuse of myself; I will only remind you of what I said — 'that neither money nor violence were of any use,' and that your only way was to make me in love with you by gentle means. Show me where I have broken my word! It is you that have foresworn yourself in coming into my bath-room, and in sending such a brutal message to my mother. No one but a rascal like Goudar would have dared to take such a message."

"Goudar a rascal, is he? Well, he is your best friend. You know he is in love with you, and that he only got you for the ambassador in the hope of enjoying you himself. The document in his possession proves that you behaved badly towards him. You are in his debt, discharge it, and then call him a rascal if you have the conscience to do so. You need not trouble to weep, for I know the source of those tears; it is defiled."

"You know nothing of it. I love you, and it is hard to have you treat me so."

"You love me? You have not taken the best way to prove it."

"As good a way as yours. You have behaved to me as if I were the vilest of prostitutes, and yesterday you seemed to think I was a brute beast, the slave of my mother. You should have written to me in person, and without the intervention of so vile an agent; I should have replied in the same way, and you need not have been afraid that you would be deceived."

"Supposing I had written, what would your answer have been?"

"I should have put all money matters out of question. I should have promised to content you on the condition that you would come and court me for a fortnight without demanding the slightest favour. We should have lived a pleasant life; we should have gone to the theatre and to the parks. I should have become madly in love with you. Then I should have given myself up to you for love, and nothing but love. I am ashamed to say that hitherto I have only given myself out of mere complaisance. Unhappy woman that I am! but I think nature meant me to love, and I thought when I saw you that my happy star had sent you to England that I might know the bliss of true affection. Instead of this you have only made me unhappy. You are the first man that has seen me weep; you have troubled my peace at home, for my mother shall never have the sum you promised her were it for nothing but a kiss."

"I am sorry to have injured you, though I did not intend to do so; but I really don't know what I can do."

"Come and see us, and keep your money, which I despise. If you love me, come and conquer me like a reasonable and not a brutal lover; and I will help you, for now you cannot doubt that I love you."

All this seemed so natural to me that I never dreamed it contained a trap. I was caught, and I promised to do what she wished, but only for a fortnight. She confirmed her promise, and her countenance became once more serene and calm. The Charpillon was a born actress.

She got up to go, and on my begging a kiss as a pledge of our reconciliation she replied, with a smile, the charm of which she well knew, that it would not do to begin by breaking the term of our agreement, and she left me more in love than ever, and full of repentance for my conduct.

The siren keeps her promise in the letter, but not in the spirit, with the result that the baffled and furious lover gives her a thrashing, which she richly deserved. Her vengeance is to feign remorse and effect a reconciliation, on the understanding that she will henceforth live with Casanova, as she had already done with his countryman Morosini. Needless to say, since the gods have struck him with madness in order to destroy him, he falls into the trap and engages a house in Chelsea — "our country-house," as he calls it. The girl moves in her belongings, and all seems for the best, but again the

reward is withheld from him under one pretext or another. Seeing him submissive and patient, she begins to taunt him (one cannot help admiring her temerity!), till, losing all control, he knocks her down. A tragedy might have followed had not the landlord interfered.

The man fortunately spoke Italian, and told me that she wanted to go away, and advised me to let her do so, or she might make it awkward for me, and he himself would be obliged to witness against me.

"Tell her to begone as fast as she likes," said I, "and to keep out of my sight for ever."

She finished dressing, staunched the blood, and went off in a sedan-chair, while I remained petrified, feeling that I did not deserve to live, and finding her conduct utterly outrageous and incomprehensible.

After an hour's consideration I decided on sending her back her trunk, and then I went home and to bed, telling my servants I was not at home to anyone.

I spent twenty-four hours in pondering over my wrongs, and at last my reason told me that the fault was mine; I despised myself. I was on the brink of suicide, but happily I escaped that fate.

I was just going out when Goudar came up and made me go in with him, as he said he wanted to speak to me. After telling me that the Charpillon had come home with a swollen cheek which prevented her showing herself, he advised me to abandon all claims on her or her mother, or the latter would bring a false accusation against me which might cost me my life. Those who know England, and especially London, will not need to be informed as to the nature of this accusation, which is so easily brought in England; it will suffice to say that through it Sodom was overwhelmed.

"The mother has engaged me to mediate," said Goudar, "and if you leave her alone, she will do you no harm."

I spent the day with him, foolishly complaining, and telling him that he could assure the mother that I would take no proceedings against her, but that I should like to know if she had the courage to receive this assurance from my own lips.

"I will carry your message," said he, "but I pity you; for you are going into their nets again, and will end in utter ruin."

I fancied they would be ashamed to see me; but I was very

much mistaken, for Goudar came back laughing, and said the mother expressed a hope that I should always be the friend of the family. I ought to have refused to have anything more to do with them, but I had not the strength to play the man. I called at Denmark Street the same evening, and spent an hour without uttering a syllable. The Charpillon sat opposite to me, with eyes lowered to a piece of embroidery, while from time to time she pretended to wipe away a tear as she let me see the ravages I had worked on her cheek.

I saw her every day and always in silence till the fatal mark had disappeared, but during these mad visits the poison of desire was so instilled into my veins that if she had known my state of mind she might have despoiled me of all I possessed for a single favour.

When she was once more as beautiful as ever I felt as if I must die if I did not hold her in my arms again, and I bought a magnificent pier-glass and a splendid breakfast service in Dresden china, and sent them to her with an amorous epistle which must have made her think me either the most extravagant or the most cowardly of men. She wrote in answer that she would expect me to sup with her in her room, that she might give me the tenderest proofs of her gratitude.

This letter sent me completely mad with joy, and in a paroxysm of delight I resolved to surrender to her keeping the two bills of exchange which Bolomé had given me, and which gave me power to send her mother and aunts to prison.

Full of the happiness that awaited me, and enchanted with my own idiotic heroism, I went to her in the evening. She received me in the parlour with her mother, and I was delighted to see the pier-glass over the mantel, and the china displayed on a little table. After a hundred words of love and tenderness she asked me to come up to her room, and her mother wished us good night. I was overwhelmed with joy. After a delicate little supper I took out the bills of exchange, and after telling her their history gave them up to her, to show that I had no intention of avenging myself on her mother and aunts. I made her promise that she would never part with them, and she said she would never do so, and with many expressions of gratitude and wonder at my generosity she locked them up with great care.

Then I thought it was time to give her some marks of my passion, and I found her kind; but she began to weep bitterly.

For a quarter of an hour I remained silent and motionless, as if petrified. At last I rose with apparent coolness, and took my cloak and sword.

"What!" said she, "are you not going to spend the night with me?"

"No."

"But we shall see each other to-morrow?"

"I hope so. Good-night."

I left that infernal abode, and went home to bed.

At eight o'clock the next morning Jarbe told me that the Charpillon wanted to see me, and that she had sent away her chairman.

"Tell her that I can't see her."

But I had hardly spoken when she came in, and Jarbe went out. I addressed her with the utmost calmness, and begged her to give me back the two bills of exchange I had placed in her hands the night before.

"I haven't got them about me; but why do you want me to return them to you?"

At this question I could contain myself no longer, and launched a storm of abuse at her. It was an explosion which relieved nature, and ended with an involuntary shower of tears. My infamous seductress stood as calmly as Innocence itself; and when I was so choked with sobs that I could not utter a word, she said she had only been cruel because her mother had made her swear an oath never to give herself to anyone in her own house, and that she had only come now to convince me of her love, to give herself up to me without reserve, and never to leave me any more if I wished it.

The reader who imagines that at these words rage gave place to love, and that I hastened to obtain the prize, does not know the nature of the passion so well as the vile woman whose plaything I was. From hot love to hot anger is a short journey, but the return is slow and difficult. If there be only anger in a man's breast it may be subdued by tenderness, by submission, and affection; but when to anger is added a feeling of indignation at having been shamefully deceived, it is impossible to pass suddenly to thoughts of love and voluptuous enjoyment. With me mere anger has never been of long duration, but when I am indignant the only cure is forgetfulness.

The Charpillon knew perfectly well that I would not take her at her word, and this kind of science was inborn in her. The instinct of women teaches them greater secrets than all the philosophy and the research of men.

In the evening this monster left me, feigning to be disappointed and disconsolate, and saying:

"I hope you will come and see me again when you are once more yourself."

She had spent eight hours with me, during which time she had only spoken to deny my suppositions, which were perfectly true, but which she could not afford to let pass. I had not taken anything all day, in order that I might not be obliged to offer her anything or to eat with her.

After she had left me I took some soup and then enjoyed a quiet sleep, for which I felt all the better. When I came to consider what had passed the day before I concluded that the Charpillon was repentant, but I seemed no longer to care anything about her.

Here I may as well confess, in all humility, what a change love worked on me in London, though I had attained the age of thirty-eight. Here closed the first act of my life; the second closed when I left Venice in 1783, and probably the third will close here, as I amuse myself by writing these Memoirs. Thus, the three-act comedy will finish, and if it be hissed, as may possibly be the case, I shall not hear the sounds of disapproval. But as yet the reader has not seen the last and I think the most interesting scene of the first act.

I went for a walk in the Green Park and met Goudar. I was glad to see him, as the rogue was useful to me.

"I have just been at the Charpillons'," he began; "they were all in high spirits. I tried in vain to turn the conversation on you, but not a word would they utter."

"I despise them entirely," I rejoined, "I don't want to have anything more to do with them."

He told me I was quite right, and advised me to persevere in my plan. I made him dine with me, and then we went to see the well-known procuress, Mrs. Wells, and saw the celebrated courtesan, Kitty Fisher, who was waiting for the Duke of ** to take her to a ball. She was magnificently dressed, and it is no exaggeration to say that she had on diamonds worth five hundred

thousand francs. Goudar told me that if I liked I might have her then and there for ten guineas. I did not care to do so, however, for, though charming, she could only speak English, and I liked to have all my senses, including that of hearing, gratified. When she had gone, Mrs. Wells told us that Kitty had eaten a bank-note for a thousand guineas, on a slice of bread and butter, that very day. The note was a present from Sir ** Akins, brother of the fair Mrs. Pitt. I do not know whether the bank thanked Kitty for the present she had made it.

I spent an hour with a girl named Kennedy, a fair Irishwoman, who could speak a sort of French, and behaved most extravagantly under the influence of champagne; but the image of the Charpillon was still before me, though I knew it not, and I could not enjoy anything. I went home feeling sad and ill pleased with myself. Common sense told me to drive all thoughts of that wretched woman out of my head, but something I called honour bade me not leave her the triumph of having won the two bills of exchange from me for nothing, and made me determine to get them back by fair means or foul.

M. Malingan, at whose house I had made the acquaintance of this creature, came and asked me to dinner. He had asked me to dine with him several times before, and I had always refused, and now I would not accept until I had heard what guests he had invited. The names were all strange to me, so I agreed to come.

When I arrived I found two young ladies from Liège, in one of whom I got interested directly. She introduced me to her husband, and to another young man who seemed to be the cavalier of the other lady, her cousin.

The company pleased me, and I was in hopes that I should spend a happy day, but my evil genius brought the Charpillon to mar the feast. She came into the room in high glee, and said to Malingan:

"I should not have come to beg you to give me a dinner if I had known that you would have so many guests, and if I am at all in the way I will go."

Everybody welcomed her, myself excepted, for I was on the rack. To make matters worse, she was placed at my left hand. If she had come in before we sat down to dinner I should have made some excuse and gone away, but as we had begun the soup

a sudden flight would have covered me with ridicule. I adopted the plan of not looking at her, reserving all my politeness for the lady on my right. When the meal was over Malingan took me apart, and swore to me that he had not invited the Charpillon, but I was not convinced, though I pretended to be for politeness' sake.

The two ladies from Liège and their cavaliers were embarking for Ostend in a few days, and in speaking of their departure the one to whom I had taken a fancy said that she was sorry to be leaving England without having seen Richmond. I begged her to give me the pleasure of showing it her, and without waiting for an answer I asked her husband and all the company to be present, excepting the Charpillon, whom I pretended not to see.

The invitation was accepted.

"Two carriages," I said, "holding four each, shall be ready at eight o'clock, and we shall be exactly eight."

"No, nine, for I am coming," said the Charpillon, giving me an impudent stare, "and I hope you will not drive me away."

"No, that would be impolite, I will ride in front on horseback."

"Oh, not at all! Emilie shall sit on my lap."

Emilie was Malingan's daughter, and as everybody seemed to think the arrangement an extremely pleasant one I had not the courage to resist. A few moments after, I was obliged to leave the room for a few moments, and when I came back I met her on the landing. She told me I had insulted her grievously, and that unless I made amends I should feel her vengeance.

"You can begin your vengeance," I said, "by returning my bills of exchange."

"You shall have them to-morrow, but you had better try and make me forget the insult you have put on me."

I left the company in the evening, having arranged that we should all breakfast together the next day.

At eight o'clock the two carriages were ready, and Malingan, his wife, his daughter, and the two gentlemen got into the first vehicle, and I had to get into the second with the ladies from Liège and the Charpillon, who seemed to have become very intimate with them. This made me ill-tempered, and I sulked the whole way. We were an hour and a quarter on the journey, and when we arrived I ordered a good dinner, and then we proceeded

to view the gardens; the day was a beautiful one, though it was autumn.

Whilst we were talking the Charpillon came up to me and said she wanted to return the bills in the same place in which I had given her them. As we were at some distance from the others I pelted her with abuse, telling her of her perfidy and of her corruption at an age when she should have retained some vestiges of innocence, calling her by the name she deserved, as I reminded her how often she had already prostituted herself; in short I threatened her with my vengeance if she pushed me to extremities. But she was as cold as ice, and opposed a calm front to the storm of invective I rained in her ears. However, as the other guests were at no great distance, she begged me to speak more softly, but they heard me and I was very glad of it.

At last we sat down to dinner, and the wretched woman contrived to get a place beside me, and behaved all the while as if I were her lover, or at any rate as if she loved me. She did not seem to care what people thought of my coldness, while I was in a rage, for the company must either have thought me a fool or else that she was making game of me.

After dinner we returned to the garden, and the Charpillon, determined to gain the victory, clung to my arm and after several turns led me towards the maze where she wished to try her power. She made me sit down on the grass beside her, and attacked me with passionate words and tender caresses, and by displaying the most interesting of her charms she succeeded in seducing me, but still I do not know whether I was impelled by love or vengeance, and I am inclined to think that my feelings were a compound of both passions.

"What! you would deceive me again?"

"No, no, but we have done enough now. I promise to spend the night in your arms in your own house."

For a moment I lost my senses. I only saw the deceitful wretch who had profited by my foolish credulity so many times, and I resolved to enjoy or take vengeance. I held her down with my left arm, and drawing a small knife from my pocket I opened it with my teeth and pricked her neck, threatening to kill her if she resisted me.

"Do as you like," she said with perfect calm, "I only ask

you to leave me my life, but after you have satisfied yourself I will not leave the spot; I will not enter your carriage unless you carry me by force, and everybody shall know the reason."

This threat had no effect, for I had already got back my senses, and I pitied myself for being degraded by a creature for whom I had the greatest contempt, in spite of the almost magical influence she had over me, and the furious desires she knew how to kindle in my breast. I rose without a word, and taking my hat and cane I hastened to leave a place where unbridled passion had brought me to the brink of ruin.

My readers will scarcely believe me (but it is nevertheless the exact truth) when I say that the impudent creature hastened to rejoin me, and took my arm again as if nothing had happened. A girl of her age could not have played the part so well unless she had been already tried in a hundred battles. When we rejoined the company I was asked if I were ill, while nobody noticed the slightest alteration in her.

When we got back to London I excused myself under the plea of a bad headache, and returned home.

The adventure had made a terrible impression on me, and I saw that if I did not avoid all intercourse with this girl I should be brought to ruin. There was something about her I could not resist. I therefore resolved to see her no more, but feeling ashamed of my weakness in giving her the bills of exchange I wrote her mother a note requesting her to make her daughter return them, or else I should be compelled to take harsh measures.

In the afternoon I received the following reply: —

"Sir, — I am exceedingly surprised at your addressing yourself to me about the bills you handed to my daughter. She tells me she will give you them back in person when you show more discretion, and have learnt to respect her."

This impudent letter so enraged me that I forgot my vow of the morning. I put two pistols in my pocket and proceeded to the wretched woman's abode to compel her to return me my bills if she did not wish to be soundly caned.

I only took the pistols to overawe the two male rascals who supped with them every evening. I was furious when I arrived, but when I passed by the door I saw a handsome young hairdresser, who did the Charpillon's hair every Saturday evening, going into the house.

I did not want a stranger to be present at the scene I meant to make, so I waited at the corner of the street for the hairdresser to go. After I had waited half an hour Rostaing and Cauman, the two supports of the house, came out and went away, much to my delight. I waited on; eleven struck, and the handsome barber had not yet gone. A little before midnight a servant came out with a lamp, I suppose to look for something that had fallen out of the window. I approached noiselessly, stepped in and opened the parlour door, which was close to the street, and saw . . . the Charpillon and the barber stretched on the sofa.

When the slut saw me she gave a shriek. Her gallant I caned soundly until he escaped in the confusion consequent on the servants, mother, and aunts all rushing into the room. While this was going on the Charpillon, half-naked, remained crouched behind the sofa, trembling lest the blows should begin to descend on her. Then the three hags set upon me like furies; but their abuse only irritated me, and I broke the pier-glass, the china, and the furniture, and as they still howled and shrieked I roared out that if they did not cease I would break their heads. At this they began to calm.

I threw myself upon the fatal sofa, and bade the mother return me the bills of exchange; but just then the watchman came in.

There is only one watchman to a district, which he perambulates all night with a lantern in one hand and a staff in the other. On these men the peace of the great city depends. I put three or four crowns into his hand and said "Go away," and so saying shut the door upon him. Then I sat down once more and asked again for the bills of exchange.

"I have not got them; my daughter keeps them."

"Call her."

The two maids said that whilst I was breaking the china she had escaped by the street door, and that they did not know what had become of her. Then the mother and aunts began to shriek, weep, and exclaim:

"My poor daughter alone in the streets of London at midnight! My dear niece, alas! alas! she is lost. Cursed be the hour when you came to England to make us all unhappy!"

My rage had evaporated, and I trembled at the thought of this young frightened girl running about the streets at such an hour.

"Go and look for her at the neighbours' houses," I said to the servants, "no doubt you will find her. When you tell me she is safe, you shall have a guinea apiece."

When the three Gorgons saw I was interested, their tears, complaints, and invectives began again with renewed vigour, while I kept silence as much as to say that they were in the right. I awaited the return of the servants with impatience, and at last at one o'clock they came back with looks of despair.

"We have looked for her everywhere," said they, "but we can't find her."

I gave them the two guineas as if they had succeeded, whilst I sat motionless reflecting on the terrible consequences of my anger. How foolish is man when he is in love!

I was idiot enough to express my repentance to the three old cheats. I begged them to seek for her everywhere when dawn appeared, and to let me know of her return that I might fall at her feet to beg pardon, and never see her face again. I also promised to pay for all the damage I had done, and to give them a full receipt for the bills of exchange. After these acts, done to the everlasting shame of my good sense, after this apology made to procuresses who laughed at me and my honour, I went home, promising two guineas to the servant who should bring me tidings that her young mistress had come home.

On leaving the house I found the watchman at the door; he had been waiting to see me home. It was two o'clock. I threw myself on my bed, and the six hours of sleep I obtained, though troubled by fearful dreams, probably saved me from madness.

At eight o'clock I heard a knock at the door, and on opening the window found it was one of the servants from the house of my foes. I cried out to let her in, and I breathed again on hearing that Miss Charpillon had just arrived in a sedan-chair in a pitiable condition, and that she had been put to bed.

"I made haste to come and tell you," said the cunning maid, "not for the sake of your two guineas, but because I saw you were so unhappy."

This duped me directly. I gave her the two guineas, and made her sit down on my bed, begging her to tell me all about her mistress's return. I did not dream that she had been schooled by my enemies; but during the whole of this period I was deprived of the right use of my reason.

The slut began by saying that her young mistress loved me, and had only deceived me in accordance with her mother's orders.

"I know that," I said, "but where did she pass the night?"

"At a shop which she found open, and where she was known from having bought various articles there. She is in bed with a fever, and I am afraid it may have serious consequences."

"Tell her that I am coming to pass the day beside her bed, and bring me her reply."

"I will send the other girl if you like."

"No, she only speaks English."

She went away, and as she had not returned by three o'clock I decided on calling to hear how she was. I knocked at the door, and one of the aunts appeared and begged me not to enter as the two friends of the house were there in a fury against me, and her niece lay in a delirium, crying out "There's Seingalt, there's Seingalt! He's going to kill me. Help! help!" "For God's sake, sir, go away!"

I went home desperate, without the slightest suspicion that it was all a lie. I spent the whole day without eating anything; I could not swallow a mouthful. All night I kept awake, and though I took several glasses of strong waters I could obtain no rest.

At nine o'clock the next morning I knocked at the Charpillon's door, and the old aunt came and held it half open as before. She forbade me to enter, saying that her niece was still delirious, continually calling on me in her transports, and that the doctor had declared that if the disease continued its course she had not twenty-four hours to live.

I gave her a bank-note for ten guineas and went away, like the fool I was. On my way back I met Goudar, who was quite frightened at my aspect. I begged him to go and see how the Charpillon really was, and then to come and pass the rest of the day with me. An hour after, he came back and said he had found them all in tears and that the girl was *in extremis*.

"Did you see her?"

"No, they said she could see no one."

"Do you think it is all true?"

"I don't know what to think. The girl told me it was all your fault."

I then told him the whole story. He could only pity me, but when he heard that I had neither eaten nor slept for the last forty-eight hours he said very wisely that if I did not take care I should lose my reason or my life. I knew it, but I could find no remedy. He spent the day with me and did me good. As I could not eat I drank a good deal, and not being able to sleep I spent the night in striding up and down my room like a man beside himself.

On the third day, having heard nothing positive about the Charpillon, I went out at seven o'clock in the morning to call on her. After I had waited a quarter of an hour in the street, the door was partly opened, and I saw her mother all in tears, but she would not let me come in. She said her daughter was in the last agony. At the same instant a pale and thin old man came out telling the mother that we must resign ourselves to the will of God. I asked the infamous creature if it were the doctor.

"The doctor is no good now," said the old hypocrite, weeping anew, "he is a minister of the Gospel, and there is another of them upstairs. My poor daughter! In another hour she will be no more."

I felt as if an icy hand had closed upon my heart. I burst into tears and left the woman, saying:

"It is true that my hand dealt the blow, but her death lies at your door."

As I walked away my knees seemed to bend under me, and I entered my house determined to commit suicide.

With this fearful idea, I gave orders that I was not at home to anyone. As soon as I got to my room I put my watches, rings, snuff-boxes, purse, and pocket-book in my casket, and shut it up in my escritoire. I then wrote a letter to the Venetian ambassador, informing him that all my property was to go to M. de Bragadin after my death. I sealed the letter and put it with the casket, and took the key with me, and also silver to the amount of a few guineas. I took my pistols and went out with the firm intention of drowning myself in the Thames, near the Tower of London.

Pondering over my plan with the utmost coolness, I went and bought some balls of lead as large as my pockets would hold, and as heavy as I could bear, to carry to the Tower, where I intended to go on foot. On my way I was strengthened in my

purpose by the reflection that if I continued to live I should be tormented for the remainder of my days by the pale shade of the Charpillon reproaching me as her murderer. I even congratulated myself on being able to carry out my purpose without any effort, and I also felt a secret pride in my courage.

I walked slowly on account of the enormous weight I bore, which would assure me a speedy passage to the bottom of the river.

By Westminster Bridge my good fortune made me meet Sir Edgar **, a rich young Englishman, who lived a careless and joyous life. I had made his acquaintance at Lord Pembroke's, and he had dined with me several times. We suited one another, his conversation was agreeable, and we had passed many pleasant hours together. I tried to avoid him, but he saw me, and came up and took me by the arm in a friendly manner.

"Where are you going? Come with me, unless you are going to deliver some captive. Come along, we shall have a pleasant party."

"I can't come, my dear fellow, let me go."

"What's the matter? I hardly recognised you, you looked so solemn."

"Nothing is the matter."

"Nothing? You should look at your face in the glass. Now I feel quite sure that you are going to commit a foolish action."

"Not at all."

"It's no good denying it."

"I tell you there's nothing the matter with me. Good-bye, I shall see you again."

"It's no good, I won't leave you. Come along, we will walk together."

His eyes happening to fall on my breeches pocket he noticed my pistol, and putting his hand on the other pocket he felt the other pistol, and said:

"You are going to fight a duel; I should like to see it. I won't interfere with the affair, but neither will I leave you."

I tried to put on a smile, and assured him that he was mistaken, and that I was only going for a walk to pass the time.

"Very good," said Edgar, "then I hope my society is as pleasant to you as yours is to me; I won't leave you. After we have taken a walk we will go and dine at the Canon. I will get

two girls to come and join us, and we shall have a gay little party of four."

"My dear friend, you must excuse me; I am in a melancholy mood, and I want to be alone to get over it."

"You can be alone to-morrow, if you like, but I am sure you will be all right in the next three hours, and if not, why I will share your madness. Where did you think of dining?"

"Nowhere; I have no appetite. I have been fasting for the last three days, and I can only drink."

"Ah! I begin to see daylight. Something has crossed you, and you are going to let it kill you as it killed one of my brothers. I must see what can be done."

Edgar argued, insisted, and joked till at last I said to myself, "A day longer will not matter, I can do the deed when he leaves me, and I shall only have to bear with life a few hours longer."

When Edgar heard that I had no particular object in crossing the bridge he said that we had better turn back, and I let myself be persuaded; but in half an hour I begged him to take me somewhere where I could wait for him, as I could not bear the weight of the lead any longer. I gave him my word of honour that I would meet him at the Canon.

As soon as I was alone I emptied my pockets, and put the leaden balls into a cupboard. Then I lay down and began to consider whether the good-natured young man would prevent me committing suicide, as he had already made me postpone it.

I reasoned, not as one that hopes, but rather as one that foresaw that Edgar would hinder me from shortening my days. Thus I waited in the tavern for the young Englishman, doubtful whether he was doing me a service or an injury.

Although Edgar was a profligate, he was a sensible man, and my story made him furious. He threw his arms around my neck, and told me he should always think the day on which he rescued me from death for so unworthy an object the happiest in his life. He could scarcely credit the infamy of the Charpillon and her mother. He told me I could have the mother arrested, though I had not got the bills of exchange, as her mother's letter acknowledging her daughter's possession of the bills was sufficient evidence.

Without informing him of my intention, I resolved that moment to have her arrested. Before we parted we swore eternal

friendship, but the reader will see before long what a penance the kind Englishman had to do for befriending me.

The next day I went to the attorney I had employed against Count Schwerin. After hearing my story he said that I had an undoubted claim, and that I could arrest the mother and the two aunts.

Without losing time I went before a magistrate, who took my sworn information and granted me a warrant. The same official who had arrested Schwerin took charge of the affair; but as he did not know the women by sight it was necessary that someone who did should go with him, for though he was certain of surprising them there might be several other women present, and he might not arrest the right ones.

As Goudar would not have undertaken the delicate task of pointing them out, I resolved on accompanying him myself.

I made an appointment with him at an hour when I knew they would be all in the parlour. He was to enter directly the door was opened, and I would come in at the same instant and point out the women he had to arrest. In England all judicial proceedings are conducted with the utmost punctuality, and everything went off as I had arranged. The bailiff and his subaltern stepped into the parlor and I followed in their footsteps. I pointed out the mother and the two sisters and then made haste to escape, for the sight of the Charpillon, dressed in black, standing by the hearth, made me shudder. I felt cured, certainly; but the wounds she had given me were not yet healed, and I cannot say what might have happened if the Circe had had the presence of mind to throw her arms about my neck and beg for mercy.

As soon as I had seen these women in the hands of justice I fled, tasting the sweets of vengeance, which are very great, but yet a sign of unhappiness. The rage in which I had arrested the three procuresses, and my terror in seeing the woman who had well-nigh killed me, showed that I was not really cured. To be so I must fly from them and forget them altogether.

The next morning Goudar came and congratulated me on the bold step I had taken, which proved, he said, that I was either cured or more in love than ever. "I have just come from Denmark Street," he added, "and I only saw the grandmother, who was weeping bitterly, and an attorney, whom no doubt she was consulting."

"Then you have heard what has happened?"

"Yes, I came up a minute after you had gone and I stayed till the three old sluts made up their minds to go with the constable. They resisted and said he ought to leave them till the next day, when they would be able to find someone to bail them. The two bravos drew their swords to resist the law, but the other constable disarmed them one after the other, and the three women were led off. The Charpillon wanted to accompany them, but it was judged best that she should remain at liberty, in order to try and set them free."

Goudar concluded by saying that he should go and see them in prison, and if I felt disposed to come to an arrangement he would mediate between us. I told him that the only arrangement I would accept was the payment of the six thousand francs, and that they might think themselves very lucky that I did not insist on having my interest, and thus repaying myself in part for the sums they had cheated out of me.

A fortnight elapsed without my hearing any more of the matter. The Charpillon dined with them every day, and, in fact, kept them. It must have cost her a good deal, for they had two rooms, and their landlord would not allow them to have their meals prepared outside the prison. Goudar told me that the Charpillon said she would never beg me to listen to her mother, though she knew she had only to call on me to obtain anything she wanted. She thought me the most abominable of men. If I feel obliged to maintain that she was equally abominable, I must confess that on this occasion she showed more strength of mind than I; but whereas I had acted out of passion, her misdeeds were calculated, and tended solely to her own interests.

For the whole of this fortnight I had sought for Edgar in vain, but one morning he came to see me, looking in high spirits.

"Where have you been hiding all this time?" said I, "I have been looking for you everywhere."

"Love has been keeping me a prisoner," said he, "I have got some money for you."

"For me? From what quarter?"

"On behalf of the Ansperghers. Give me a receipt and the necessary declaration, for I am going to restore them myself to the poor Charpillon, who has been weeping for the last fortnight."

"I dare say she has, I have seen her weep myself; but I like the way in which she has chosen the being who delivered me from her chains as a protector. Does she know that I owe my life to you?"

"She only knew that I was with you at Ranelagh when you saw her dancing instead of dying, but I have told her the whole story since."

"No doubt she wants you to plead with me in her favour."

"By no means. She has just been telling me that you are a monster of ingratitude, for she loved you and gave you several proofs of her affection, but now she hates you."

"Thank Heaven for that! The wretched woman! It's curious she should have selected you as her lover by way of taking vengeance on me, but take care! she will punish you."

"It may be so, but at all events it's a pleasant kind of punishment."

"I hope you may be happy, but look to yourself; she is a mistress in all sorts of deceit."

Edgar counted me out two hundred and fifty guineas, for which I gave him a receipt and the declaration he required, and with these documents he went off in high spirits.

After this I might surely flatter myself that all was at an end between us, but I was mistaken.

Just about this time the Crown Prince of Brunswick, now the reigning duke, married the King of England's sister. The Common Council presented him with the freedom of the City, and the Goldsmiths' Company admitted him into their society, and gave him a splendid golden box containing the documents which made him a London citizen. The prince was the first gentleman in Europe, and yet he did not disdain to add this new honour to a family illustrious for fourteen hundred years.

On this occasion Lady Harrington was the means of getting Madame Cornelis two hundred guineas. She lent her room in Soho Square to a confectioner who gave a ball and supper to a thousand persons at three guineas each. I paid my three guineas, and had the honour of standing up all the evening with six hundred others, for the table only seated four hundred, and there were several ladies who were unable to procure seats.

That evening I saw Lady Grafton seated beside the Duke of Cumberland. She wore her hair without any powder, and all the

other ladies were exclaiming about it, and saying how very unbecoming it was. They could not anathematize the innovator too much, but in less than six months Lady Grafton's style of doing the hair became common, crossed the Channel, and spread all over Europe, though it has been given another name. It is still in fashion, and is the only method that can boast the age of thirty years, though it was so unmercifully ridiculed at first.

The supper for which the giver of the feast had received three thousand guineas, or sixty-five thousand francs, contained a most varied assortment of delicacies, but as I had not been dancing, and did not feel taken with any of the ladies present, I left at one in the morning. It was Sunday, a day on which all persons, save criminals, are exempt from arrest; but, nevertheless, the following adventure befell me:—

I was dressed magnificently, and was driving home in my carriage, with my Negro and another servant seated behind me; and just as we entered Pall Mall I heard a voice crying, "Good-night, Seingalt." I put my head out of the window to reply, and in an instant the carriage was surrounded by men armed with pistols, and one of them said:

"In the king's name!"

My servant asked what they wanted, and they answered:

"To take him to Newgate, for Sunday makes no difference to criminals."

"And what crime have I committed?"

"You will hear that in prison."

"My master has a right to know his crime before he goes to prison," said the Negro.

"Yes, but the magistrate's abed."

The Negro stuck to his position, however, and the people who had come up declared with one consent that he was in the right.

The head-constable gave in, and said he would take me to a house in the City.

"Then drive to the City," said I, "and have done with it."

We stopped before the house, and I was placed in a large room on the ground-floor, furnished solely with benches and long tables. My servant sent back the carriage, and came to keep me company. The six constables said they could not leave me, and told me I should send out for some meat and drink for them. I told my Negro to give them what they wanted, and to be as amicable with them as was possible.

As I had not committed any crime, I was quite at ease; I knew that my arrest must be the effect of a slander, and as I was aware that London justice was speedy and equitable, I thought I should soon be free. But I blamed myself for having transgressed the excellent maxim, never to answer anyone in the night time; for if I had not done so I should have been in my house, and not in prison. The mistake, however, had been committed, and there was nothing to be done but to wait patiently. I amused myself by reflecting on my rapid passage from a numerous and exalted assemblage to the vile place I now occupied, though I was still dressed like a prince.

At last the day dawned, and the keeper of the tavern came to see who the prisoner was. I could not help laughing at him when he saw me, for he immediately began to abuse the constables for not awaking him when I came; he had lost the guinea I should have paid for a private room. At last news was brought that the magistrate was sitting, and that I must be brought up.

A coach was summoned, and I got into it, for if I had dared to walk along the streets in my magnificent attire the mob would have pelted me.

I went into the hall of justice, and all eyes were at once attracted towards me; my silks and satins appeared to them the height of impertinence.

At the end of the room I saw a gentleman sitting in an armchair, and concluded him to be my judge. I was right, and the judge was blind. He wore a broad band round his head, passing over his eyes. A man beside me, guessing I was a foreigner, said in French:

"Be of good courage, Mr. Fielding is a just and equitable magistrate."

I thanked the kindly unknown, and was delighted to see before me this famous and estimable writer, whose works are an honour to the English nation.

When my turn came the clerk of the court told Mr. Fielding my name; at least, so I presume.

"Signor Casanova," said he, in excellent Italian, "be kind enough to step forward. I wish to speak to you."

I was delighted to hear the accents of my native tongue, and making my way through the press I came up to the bar of the court, and said:

"*Eccomi, Signore.*"

He continued to speak Italian, and said:

"Signor de Casanova, of Venice, you are condemned to perpetual confinement in the prisons of His Majesty the King of Great Britain."

"I should like to know, sir, for what crime I am condemned. Would you be kind enough to inform me as to its nature?"

"Your demand is a reasonable one, for with us no one is condemned without knowing the cause of his condemnation. You must know, then, that the accusation (which is supported by two witnesses) charges you with intending to do grievous bodily harm to the person of a pretty girl; and as this pretty girl aforesaid goes in dread of you, the law decrees that you must be kept in prison for the rest of your days."

"Sir, this accusation is a groundless calumny; to that I will take oath! It is very possible indeed that the girl may fear my vengeance when she comes to consider her own conduct, but I can assure you that I have had no such designs hitherto, and I don't think I ever shall."

"She has two witnesses."

"Then they are false ones. But may I ask your worship the name of my accuser?"

"Miss Charpillon."

"I thought as much; but I have never given her aught but proofs of my affection."

"Then you have no wish to do her any bodily harm?"

"Certainly not."

"Then I congratulate you. You can dine at home; but you must find two sureties. I must have an assurance from the mouths of two householders that you will never commit such a crime."

"Whom shall I find to do so?"

"Two well-known Englishmen, whose friendship you have gained, and who know that you are incapable of such an action. Send for them, and if they arrive before I go to dinner I will set you at liberty."

The constable took me back to prison, where I had passed the night, and I gave my servants the addresses of all the householders I recollected, bidding them explain my situation, and to be as quick as possible. They ought to have come before noon,

but London is such a large place! They did not arrive, and the magistrate went to dinner. I comforted myself by the thought that he would sit in the afternoon, but I had to put up with a disagreeable experience.

The chief constable, accompanied by an interpreter, came to say that I must go to Newgate. This is a prison where the most wretched and abject criminals are kept.

I signified to him that I was awaiting bail, and that he could take me to Newgate in the evening if it did not come, but he only turned a deaf ear to my petition. The interpreter told me in a whisper that the fellow was certainly paid by the other side to put me to trouble, but that if I liked to bribe him I could stay where I was.

"How much will he want?" I asked.

The interpreter took the constable aside, and then told me that I could stay where I was for ten guineas.

"Then say that I should like to see Newgate."

A coach was summoned, and I was taken away.

When I got to this abode of misery and despair, a hell, such as Dante might have conceived, a crowd of wretches, some of whom were to be hanged in the course of the week, greeted me by deriding my elegant attire. I did not answer them, and they began to get angry and to abuse me. The gaoler quieted them by saying that I was a foreigner and did not understand English, and then took me to a cell, informing me how much it would cost me, and of the prison rules, as if he felt certain that I should make a long stay. But in the course of half an hour, the constable who had tried to get ten guineas out of me told me that bail had arrived and that my carriage was at the door.

I thanked God from the bottom of my heart, and soon found myself in the presence of the blind magistrate. My bail consisted of Pegu, my tailor, and Maisonneuve, my wine merchant, who said they were happy to be able to render me this slight service. In another part of the court I noticed the infamous Charpillon, Rostaing, Goudar, and an attorney. They made no impression on me, and I contented myself with giving them a look of profound contempt.

My two sureties were informed of the amount in which they were to bail me, and signed with a light heart and then the magistrate said, politely:

"Signor Casanova, please to sign your name for double the amount, and you will then be a free man again."

I went towards the clerk's table, and on asking the sum I was to answer for was informed that it was forty guineas, each of my sureties signing for twenty. I signed my name, telling Goudar that if the magistrate could have seen the Charpillon he would have valued her beauty at ten thousand guineas. I asked the names of the two witnesses, and was told that they were Rostaing and Bottarelli. I looked contemptuously at Rostaing, who was as pale as death, and averting my face from the Charpillon out of pity I said:

"The witnesses are worthy of the charge."

I saluted the judge with respect, although he could not see me, and asked the clerk if I had anything to pay. He replied in the negative, and a dispute ensued between him and the attorney of my fair enemy, who was disgusted on hearing that she could not leave the court without paying the costs of my arrest.

Just as I was going, five or six well-known Englishmen appeared to bail me out, and were mortified to hear that they had come too late. They begged me to forgive the laws of the land, which are only too often converted into a means for the annoyance of foreigners.

At last, after one of the most tedious days I have ever spent, I returned home and went to bed, laughing at the experience I had undergone.

Thus ended the first act of the comedy; the second began the next morning. I was just getting up, when I heard a noise at the street door, and on putting my head out of the window I saw Pocchini, the scoundrel who had robbed me at Stuttgart, trying to get into my house. I cried out wrathfully that I would having nothing to do with him, and slammed down my window.

A little later Goudar put in an appearance. He had got a copy of the *St. James's Chronicle*, containing a brief report of my arrest, and of my being set at liberty under a bail of eighty guineas. My name and the lady's were disguised, but Rostaing and Bottarelli were set down plainly, and the editor praised their conduct. I felt as if I should like to know Bottarelli, and begged Goudar to take me to him and Martinelli, happening to call just then, said he would come with us.

We entered a wretched room on the third floor of a wretched house, and there we beheld a picture of the greatest misery. A woman and five children clothed in rags formed the foreground, and in the background was Bottarelli, in an old dressing-gown, writing at a table worthy of Philemon and Baucis. He rose as we came in, and the sight of him moved me to compassion. I said:

"Do you know me, sir?"

"No, sir, I do not."

"I am Casanova, against whom you bore false witness; whom you tried to cast into Newgate."

"I am very sorry, but look around you and say what choice have I? I have no bread to give my children. I will do as much in your favour another time for nothing."

"Are you not afraid of the gallows?"

"No, for perjury is not punished with death; besides it is very difficult to prove."

"I have heard you are a poet."

"Yes. I have lengthened the *Didone* and abridged the *Demetrio*."

"You are a great poet, indeed!"

I felt more contempt than hatred for the rascal, and gave his wife a guinea, for which she presented me with a wretched pamphlet by her husband: *The Secrets of the Freemasons Displayed*." Bottarelli had been a monk in his native city, Pisa, and had fled to England with his wife, who had been a nun.

About this time M. de Saa surprised me by giving me a letter from my fair Portuguese, which confirmed the sad fate of poor Clairmont. Pauline said she was married to Count Al**. I was astonished to hear M. de Saa observe that he had known all about Pauline from the moment she arrived in London. That is the hobby of all diplomatists; they like people to believe that they are omniscient. However, M. de Saa was a man of worth and talent, and one could excuse this weakness as an incident inseparable from his profession; while most diplomatists only make themselves ridiculous by their assumption of universal knowledge.

M. de Saa had been almost as badly treated by the Charpillon as myself, and we might have condoled with one another, but the subject was not mentioned.

A few days afterwards, as I was walking idly about, I passed a place called the Parrot Market. As I was amusing myself by looking at these curious birds, I saw a fine young one in a cage, and asked what language it spoke. They told me that it was quite young and did not speak at all yet, so I bought it for ten guineas. I thought I would teach the bird a pretty speech, so I had the cage hung by my bed, and repeated dozens of times every day the following sentence: "*The Charpillon is a bigger wh**e than her mother.*"

The only end I had in view was my private amusement, and in a fortnight the bird had learnt the phrase with the utmost exactness; and every time it uttered the words it accompanied them with a shriek of laughter which I had not taught it, but which made me laugh myself.

One day Goudar heard the bird, and told me that if I sent it to the Exchange I should certainly get fifty guineas for it. I welcomed the idea, and resolved to make the parrot the instrument of my vengeance against the woman who had treated me so badly. I secured myself from fear of the law, which is severe in such cases, by entrusting the bird to my Negro, to whom such merchandise was very suitable.

For the first two or three days my parrot did not attract much attention, its observations being in French; but as soon as those who knew the subject of them heard it, its audience increased and bids were made. Fifty guineas seemed rather too much, and my Negro wanted me to lower the price, but I would not agree, having fallen in love with this odd revenge.

In the course of a week Goudar came to inform me of the effect the parrot's criticism had produced in the Charpillon family. As the vendor was my Negro, there could be no doubt as to whom it belonged, and who had been its master of languages. Goudar said that the Charpillon thought my revenge very ingenious, but that the mother and aunts were furious. They had consulted several counsel, who agreed in saying that a parrot could not be indicted for libel, but that they could make me pay dearly for my jest if they could prove that I had been the bird's instructor. Goudar warned me to be careful of owning to the fact, as two witnesses would suffice to undo me.

The facility with which false witnesses may be procured in London is something dreadful. I have myself seen the word

"evidence" written in large characters in a window; this is as much as to say that false witnesses may be procured within.

The *St. James's Chronicle* contained an article on my parrot, in which the writer remarked that the ladies whom the bird insulted must be very poor and friendless, or they would have bought it at once, and have thus prevented the thing from becoming the talk of the town. He added:

"The teacher of the parrot has no doubt made the bird an instrument of his vengeance, and has displayed his wit in doing so; he ought to be an Englishman."

I met my good friend Edgar, and asked him why he had not bought the little slanderer.

"Because it delights all who know anything about the object of the slander," said he.

At last Jarbe found a purchaser for fifty guineas, and I heard afterwards that Lord Grosvenor had bought it to please the Charpillon, with whom he occasionally diverted himself.

Thus my relations with that girl came to an end. I have seen her since with the greatest indifference, and without any renewal of the old pain.

The story of Marie-Anne-Geneviève Charpillon, or Charpillion, and of her worthy family is to be found not only in the Memoirs of their victim, but in the police records of the time. With the aid of the latter, M. Charles Samaran has reconstructed the family history. This edifying document proves that, whatever Casanova may have added to embellish his tale, it was scarcely in his or anyone's power to blacken the reputation of his heroine and her familiars. The grandmother's name was Catherine Brunner; she was a native of Berne, which in the eighteenth century enjoyed an unenviable fame for its underworld and "low life" resorts. Working in association with her three sisters and the daughter she had by a compatriot named Augspurgher (the form Anspergher, given in the Memoirs, seems to be a mis-spelling), she drove a prosperous if disreputable trade, principally in Paris and London. But it was only in the third generation, in the captivating person of Marie-Anne Charpillon, that their ignominious talents were to come to full fruition. When Casanova made her acquaintance, she was only seventeen years old. It was not their first meeting. Four years earlier, when shopping in Paris with the mistress of the hour, Madame Baret, he had been so struck by the looks of the child, which she then was,

that he had presented her with a pair of ear-rings for which she had been clamouring. Ten years after the Casanova affair Marie-Anne Charpillon became the mistress of the famous John Wilkes, another acquaintance of our hero. [1]

The episode of the Hanoverian sisters, which rounds off the London experiences (this form of the "sister complex" is a recurring and favourite theme in the Memoirs), is evidently an attempt to rehabilitate the discomfited hero and to reassure the reader that as a champion in the lists of Venus he has yet many a lance to break before being carried off the field. In relegating it to the Casanovian ben trovati *and dismissing it as such, we feel we are not depriving our readers of any essential enjoyment.*

Arriving at leisure and departing in haste seems henceforth to be the traveller's motto. London proved no exception, as we shall see:

In the month I had spent with the Hanoverians I had dissipated the whole of the sum resulting from the sale of the precious stones, and I found that I was in debt to the amount of four hundred guineas. I resolved to go to Lisbon by sea, and sold my diamond cross, six or seven gold snuff-boxes (after removing the portraits), all my watches except one, and two great trunks full of clothes. I then discharged my debts and found I was eighty guineas to the good, this being what remained of the fine fortune I had squandered away like a fool or a philosopher, or, perhaps, a little like both. I left my fine house where I had lived so pleasantly, and took a little room at a guinea a week. I still kept my Negro, as I had every reason to believe him to be a faithful servant.

After taking these measures I wrote to M. de Bragadin, begging him to send me two hundred sequins.

Thus having made up my mind to leave London without owing a penny to anyone, and under obligations to no man's purse, I waited for the bill of exchange from Venice. When it came I resolved to bid farewell to all my friends and to try my fortune in Lisbon, but such was not the fate which the fickle goddess had assigned to me.

A fortnight after the departure of the Hanoverians (it was

[1] *According to M. Edouard Maynial* (Casanova et son temps), *it was the Charpillon episode in Casanova's Memoirs which inspired Pierre Louÿs with the first idea for his well-known novel* La Femme et le pantin.

the end of February in the year 1764), my evil genius made me go to the Canon Tavern, where I usually dined in a room by myself. The table was laid and I was just going to sit down, when Baron Stenau came in and begged me to have my dinner brought into the next room, where he and his mistress were dining.

"I thank you," said I, "for the solitary man grows weary of his company."

I saw the English woman I had met at Sartori's, the same to whom the baron had been so generous. She spoke Italian, and was attractive in many ways, so I was well pleased to find myself opposite to her, and we had a pleasant dinner.

After a fortnight's abstinence it was not surprising that she inspired me with desires, but I concealed them nevertheless, for her lover seemed to respect her. I only allowed myself to tell the baron that I thought him the happiest of men.

Towards the close of the dinner the girl noticed three dice on the mantel and took them up, saying:

"Let us have a wager of a guinea, and spend it on oysters and champagne."

We could not refuse, and the baron having lost called the waiter and gave him his orders.

While we were eating the oysters she suggested that we should throw again to see which should pay for the dinner.

We did so and she lost.

I did not like my luck, and wishing to lose a couple of guineas I offered to throw against the baron. He accepted, and to my annoyance I won. He asked for his revenge and lost again.

"I don't want to win your money," said I, "and I will give you your revenge up to a hundred guineas."

He seemed grateful and we went on playing, and in less than half an hour he owed me a hundred guineas.

"Let us go on," said he.

"My dear baron, the luck's against you; you might lose a large sum of money. I really think we have had enough."

Without heeding my politeness, he swore against fortune and against the favour I seemed to be showing him. Finally he got up, and taking his hat and cane, went out, saying:

"I will pay you when I come back."

As soon as he had gone the girl said:

"I am sure you have been regarding me as your partner at play."

"If you have guessed that, you will also have guessed that I think you charming."

"Yes, I think I have."

"Are you angry with me?"

"Not in the least."

"You shall have the fifty guineas as soon as he has paid me."

"Very good, but the baron must know nothing about it."

"Of course not."

The bargain was scarcely struck before I began to show her how much I loved her. I had every reason to congratulate myself on her complaisance, and I thought this meeting a welcome gleam of light when all looked dark around me. We had to make haste, however, as the door was only shut with a catch. I had barely time to ascertain her address and the hour at which she could see me, and whether I should have to be careful with her lover. She replied that the baron's fidelity was not of a character to make him very exacting. I put the address in my pocket, and promised to pass a night with her.

The baron came in again, and said:

"I have been to a merchant to discount this bill of exchange, and though it is drawn on one of the best houses in Cadiz, and made out by a good house in London, he would not have anything to do with it."

I took the bill and saw some millions mentioned on it, which astonished me.

The baron said with a laugh that the currency was Portuguese milreis, and that they amounted to five hundred pounds sterling.

"If the signatures are known," said I, "I don't understand why the man won't discount it. Why don't you take it to your banker?"

"I haven't got one. I came to England with a thousand gold pieces in my pocket, and I have spent them all. As I have not got any letters of credit I cannot pay you unless the bill is discounted. If you have got any friends on the Exchange, however, you could get it done."

"If the names prove good ones I will let you have the money to-morrow morning."

"Then I will make it payable to your order."

He put his name to it, and I promised to send him either the money or the bill before noon on the day following. He gave me his address and begged me to come and dine with him, and so we parted.

The next day I went to Bosanquet, who told me that Mr. Leigh was looking out for bills of exchange on Cadiz, and I accordingly waited on him. He exclaimed that such paper was worth more than gold to him, and gave me five hundred and twenty guineas, of course after I had endorsed it.

I called on the baron and gave him the money I had just received, and he thanked me and gave me back the hundred guineas. Afterwards we had dinner, and fell to talking of his mistress.

"Are you in love with her?" said I.

"No; I have plenty of others, and if you like her you can have her for ten guineas."

I liked this way of putting it, though I had not the slightest idea of cheating the girl out of the sum I had promised her. On leaving the baron I went to see her, and as soon as she heard that the baron had paid me she ordered a delicious supper, and made me spend a night that obliterated all my sorrows from my memory. In the morning, when I handed over the fifty guineas, she said that as a reward for the way in which I kept my promise I could sup with her whenever I liked to spend six guineas. I promised to come and see her often.

The next morning I received a letter through the post, written in bad Italian, and signed, "*Your obedient godson, Daturi.*" This godson of mine was in prison for debt, and begged me to give him a few shillings to buy some food.

I had nothing particular to do, the appellation of *godson* made me curious, and so I went to the prison to see Daturi, of whose identity I had not the slightest idea. He was a fine young man of twenty; he did not know me, nor I him. I gave him his letter, and begging me to forgive him he drew a paper from his pocket and showed me his certificate of baptism, on which I saw my own name inscribed beside his name and those of his father and mother, the parish of Venice, where he was born, and the church in which he was baptized; but still I racked my memory in vain; I could not recollect him.

"If you will listen to me," he said, "I can set you right; my mother has told me the story a hundred times."

"Go on," said I, "I will listen"; and as he told his story I remembered who he was.

This young man whom I had held at the font as the son of the actor Daturi was possibly my own son. He had come to London with a troupe of jugglers to play the illustrious part of clown, or *pagliazzo*, but having quarrelled with the company he had lost his place and had got into debt to the extent of ten pounds sterling, and for this debt he had been imprisoned. Without saying anything to him about my relations with his mother, I set him free on the spot, telling him to come to me every morning, as I would give him two shillings a day for his support.

A week after I had done this good work I felt that I had caught the fearful disease from which the god Mercury had already delivered me three times, though with great danger and peril of my life. I had spent three nights with the fatal English woman, and the misfortune was doubly inconvenient under the circumstances. I was on the eve of a long sea voyage, and though Venus may have risen from the waves of the sea, sea air is by no means favourable to those on whom she has cast her malign aspect. I knew what to do, and resolved to have my case taken in hand without delay.

I left my house, not with the intention of reproaching the English woman after the manner of fools, but rather of going to a good surgeon, with whom I could make an agreement to stay in his house till my cure was completed.

I had my trunks packed just as if I was going to leave London, excepting my linen, which I sent to my washerwoman, who lived at a distance of six miles from town, and drove a great trade.

The very day I meant to change my lodging a letter was handed to me. It was from Mr. Leigh, and ran as follows:

"The bill of exchange I discounted for you is a forgery, so please send me at your earliest convenience the five hundred and twenty guineas; and if the man who has cheated you will not reimburse the money, have him arrested. For Heaven's sake do not force me to have you arrested to-morrow, and whatever you do make haste, for this may prove a hanging matter."

Fortunately I was by myself when I received the letter. I fell upon my bed, and in a moment I was covered with a cold sweat, while I trembled like a leaf. I saw the gallows before me, for

nobody would lend me the money, and they would not wait for my remittance from Venice to reach me.

To my shuddering fit succeeded a burning fever. I loaded my pistols, and went out with the determination of blowing out Baron Stenau's brains, or putting him under arrest if he did not give me the money. I reached his house, and was informed that he had sailed for Lisbon four days ago.

This Baron Stenau was a Livonian, and four months after these events he was hanged at Lisbon. I only anticipate this little event in his life because I might possibly forget it when I come to my sojourn at Riga.

As soon as I heard he was gone I saw there was no remedy and that I must save myself. I had only ten or twelve guineas left, and this sum was insufficient. I went to Trèves, a Venetian Jew to whom I had a letter from Count Algarotti, the Venetian banker. I did not think of going to Bosanquet, or Sanhel, or Salvador, who might possibly have got wind of my trouble, while Trèves had no dealings with these great bankers, and discounted a bill for a hundred sequins readily enough.

With the money in my pocket I made my way to my lodging, while deadly fear dogged every step. Leigh had given me twenty-four hours' breathing time, and I did not think him capable of breaking his word, still it would not do to trust to it. I did not want to lose my linen nor three fine suits of clothes which my tailor was keeping for me, and yet I had need of the greatest promptitude.

I called in Jarbe and asked him whether he would prefer to take twenty guineas and his dismissal, or to continue in my service. I explained that he would have to wait in London for a week, and join me at the place from which I wrote to him.

"Sir," said he, "I should like to remain in your service, and I will rejoin you wherever you please. When are you leaving?"

"In an hour's time; but say not a word, or it will cost me my life."

"Why can't you take me with you?"

"Because I want you to bring my linen which is at the wash, and my clothes which the tailor is making. I will give you sufficient money for the journey."

"I don't want anything. You shall pay me what I have spent when I rejoin you. Wait a moment."

He went out and came back again directly, and holding out sixty guineas, said:

"Take this, sir, I entreat you, my credit is good for as much more in case of need."

"I thank you, my good fellow, but I will not take your money, but be sure I will not forget your fidelity."

My tailor lived close by and I called on him, and seeing that my clothes were not yet made up I told him that I should like to sell them, and also the gold lace that was to be used in the trimming. He instantly gave me thirty guineas, which meant a gain to him of twenty-five per cent. I paid the week's rent of my lodging, and after bidding farewell to my Negro I set out with Daturi. We slept at Rochester, as my strength would carry me no farther. I was in convulsions, and had a sort of delirium. Daturi was the means of saving my life.

I had ordered post-horses to continue our journey, and Daturi of his own authority sent them back and went for a doctor, who pronounced me to be in danger of an apoplectic fit and ordered a copious blood-letting, which restored my calm. Six hours later he pronounced me fit to travel. I got to Dover early in the morning, and had only half an hour to stop, as the captain of the packet said that the tide would not allow of any delay. The worthy sailor little knew how well his views suited mine. I used this half hour in writing to Jarbe, telling him to rejoin me at Calais, and Mrs. Mercier, my landlady, to whom I had addressed the letter, wrote to tell me that she had given it him with her own hands. However, Jarbe did not come. We shall hear more of this Negro in the course of two years.

The fever and the virus that was in my blood put me in danger of my life, and on the third day I was *in extremis*. A fourth blood-letting exhausted my strength, and left me in a state of coma which lasted for twenty-four hours. This was succeeded by a crisis which restored me to life again, but it was only by dint of the most careful treatment that I found myself able to continue my journey a fortnight after my arrival in France.

Weak in health, grieved at having been the innocent cause of the worthy Mr. Leigh's losing a large sum of money, humiliated by my flight from London, indignant with Jarbe, and angry at being obliged to abandon my Portuguese project, I got into a post-chaise with Daturi, not knowing where to turn or where to go, or whether I had many more weeks to live.

I had written to Venice asking M. de Bragadin to send the sum I have mentioned to Brussels instead of London.

When I got to Dunkirk, the day after I left Paris, the first person I saw was the merchant S **, the husband of that Thérèse whom my readers may remember, the niece of Tiretta's mistress, with whom I had been in love seven years ago. The worthy man recognised me, and seeing his astonishment at the change in my appearance I told him I was recovering from a long illness, and then asked after his wife.

"She is wonderfully well," he answered, "and I hope we shall have the pleasure of seeing you to dinner to-morrow."

I said I wanted to be off at daybreak, but he would not hear of it, and protested he would be quite hurt if I went away without seeing his wife and his three children. At last I appeased him by saying that we would sup together.

My readers will remember that I had been on the point of marrying Thérèse, and this circumstance made me ashamed of presenting myself to her in such a sorry plight.

In a quarter of an hour the husband arrived with his wife and three children, the eldest of whom looked about six. After the usual greetings and tiresome inquiries after my health, Thérèse sent back the two younger children, rightly thinking that the eldest would be the only one in whom I should take any interest. He was a charming boy; and as he was exactly like his mother, the worthy merchant had no doubts as to the parentage of the child.

I laughed to myself at finding my offspring thus scattered all over Europe. At supper Thérèse gave me news of Tiretta. He had entered the Dutch East India Company's service, but having been concerned in a revolt at Batavia, he had only escaped the gallows by flight. I had my own thoughts as to the similarity between his destiny and mine, but I did not reveal them. After all it is an easy enough matter for an adventurous man who does not look where he is going, to get hanged for a mere trifle.

The next day, when I got to Tournay, I saw some grooms walking fine horses up and down, and I asked to whom they belonged.

"To the Comte de St. Germain, the adept, who has been here a month, and never goes out. Everybody who passes through the place wants to see him; but he is invisible."

This was enough to give me the same desire, so I wrote him a letter, expressing my wish to speak to him, and asking him to name an hour. His reply, which I have preserved, ran as follows:

"The gravity of my occupation compels me to exclude everyone, but you are an exception. Come whenever you like, you will be shown in. You need not mention my name nor your own. I do not ask you to share my repast, for my food is not suitable to others — to you least of all, if your appetite is what it used to be."

At nine o'clock I paid my call, and found he had grown a beard two inches long. He had a score of retorts before him, full of liquids in various stages of digestion. He told me he was experimenting with colours for his own amusement, and that he had established a hat factory for Count Cobenzl, the Austrian ambassador at Brussels. He added that the count had only given him a hundred and fifty thousand florins, which were insufficient. Then we spoke of Madame d'Urfé.

"She poisoned herself," said he, "by taking too strong a dose of the Universal Medicine, and her will shows that she thought herself to be with child. If she had come to me, I could have really made her so, though it is a difficult process, and science has not advanced far enough for us to be able to guarantee the sex of the child."

When he heard the nature of my disease, he wanted me to stay three days at Tournay for him to give me fifteen pills, which would effectually cure me, and restore me to perfect health. Then he showed me his *magistrum*, which he called *athoeter*. It was a white liquid contained in a well-stoppered phial. He told me that this liquid was the universal spirit of nature, and that if the wax on the stopper was pricked ever so lightly, the whole of the contents would disappear. I begged him to make the experiment. He gave me the phial and a pin, and I pricked the wax, and lo! the phial was empty.

"It is very fine," said I, "but what good is all this?"

"I cannot tell you; that is my secret."

He wanted to astonish me before I went, and asked me if I had any money about me. I took out several pieces and put them on the table. He got up, and without saying what he was going to do he took a burning coal and put it on a metal plate, and

placed a twelve-sols piece with a small black grain on the coal. He then blew it, and in two minutes it seemed on fire.

"Wait a moment," said the alchemist, "let it get cool"; and it cooled almost directly.

"Take it; it is yours," said he.

I took up the piece of money and found it had become gold. I felt perfectly certain that he had smuggled my silver piece away, and had substituted a gold piece coated with silver for it. I did not care to tell him as much, but to let him see that I was not taken in, I said:

"It is really very wonderful, but another time you should warn me what you are going to do, so that the operation might be attentively watched, and the piece of money noted before being placed on the burning coal."

"Those that are capable of entertaining doubts of my art," said the rogue, "are not worthy to speak to me."

This was his usual style of arrogance, to which I was accustomed. This was the last time I saw this celebrated and learned impostor; he died at Schlesing six or seven years after. The piece of money he gave me was pure gold, and two months after, Field-marshal Keith took such a fancy to it that I gave it him.

I left Tournay the next morning, and stopped at Brussels to await the answer of the letter which I had written to M. de Bragadin. Five days after, I got the letter with a bill of exchange for two hundred ducats.

CHAPTER XIX

Talks with the Great: Fredericus Rex and Catherine of Russia

HAVING for the nonce somewhat worn out his welcome in the western countries of Europe, Casanova turns his face eastwards in search of "fresh woods and pastures new." After a short stay at Brunswick, where the good-natured heir to the throne, a London acquaintance, overlooking a little amorous poaching in the royal preserves, intervenes in trouble arising over a bill of exchange — solved, as usual, to the complete satisfaction of the chevalier's honour — Casanova arrives in Berlin.

According to the Memoirs, this visit to the Prussian capital was due to nothing more than a traveller's whim; but the fact that the younger of the Calsabigi brothers was renewing there with considerable success his Paris lottery enterprise was doubtless an added consideration. Unfortunately King Frederick was just then on the point of withdrawing his patronage from the lottery, which was to cease functioning as a state institution and therefore needed reorganising on a private basis. Consulted by his old associate, Casanova drew up a plan for attracting shareholders, which, however, Calsabigi rejected. This scheme having failed, Casanova bethought himself of applying direct to the king and offering him the services of his manifold capacities. He set about it as follows:

The fifth day after my arrival at Berlin I presented myself to the lord-marshal, who since the death of his brother had been styled Lord Keith. I had seen him in London after his return from Scotland, where he had been reinstated in the family estates, which had been confiscated for Jacobitism. Frederick the Great was supposed to have brought this about. Lord Keith lived at Berlin, resting on his laurels, and enjoying the blessings of peace.

With his old simplicity of manner he told me he was glad to see me again, and asked if I proposed making any stay at Berlin. I replied that I would willingly do so if the king would give me a suitable office. I asked him if he would speak a word in my favour; but he replied that the king liked to judge men's characters for himself, and would often discover merit where no one had suspected its presence, and *vice versa*.

He advised me to intimate to the king in writing that I desired to have the honour of an interview. "When you speak to him," the good old man added, "you may say that you know me, and the king will doubtless address me on the subject, and you may be sure what I say shall not be to your disadvantage."

"But, my lord, how can I write to a monarch of whom I know nothing, and who knows nothing of me? I should not have thought of such a step."

"I dare say, but don't you wish to speak to him?"

"Certainly."

"That is enough. Your letter will make him aware of your desire and nothing more."

"But will he reply?"

"Undoubtedly; he replies to everybody. He will tell you when and where he will see you. His majesty is now at Sans-Souci. I am curious to know the nature of your interview with the monarch, who, as you can see, is not afraid of being imposed on."

When I got home I wrote a plain but respectful letter to the king, asking where and at what time I could introduce myself to him.

In two days I received a letter signed "*Frederick*," in which the receipt of my letter was acknowledged, and I was told that I should find his majesty in the garden of Sans-Souci at four o'clock.

As may be imagined I was punctual to my appointment. I was at Sans-Souci at three, clad in a simple black dress. When I got into the courtyard there was not so much as a sentinel to stop me, so I went on, mounted a stair, and opened a door in front of me. I found myself in a picture-gallery, and the curator came up to me and offered to show me over it.

"I have not come to admire these masterpieces," I replied, "but to see the king, who informed me in writing that I should find him in the garden."

"He is now at a concert playing the flute; he does so every day after dinner. Did he name any time?"

"Yes, four o'clock, but he will have forgotten that."

"The king never forgets anything; he will keep the appointment, and you will do well to go into the garden and await him."

I had been in the garden for some minutes when I saw him appear, followed by his reader and a pretty damsel. As soon as he saw me he accosted me, taking off his old hat, and pronouncing my name. Then he asked in a terrible voice what I wanted of him. This greeting surprised me, and my voice stuck in my throat.

"Well, speak out. Are you not the person who wrote to me?"

"Yes, sire, but I have forgotten everything now. I thought that I should not be awed by the majesty of a king, but I was mistaken. My lord-marshal should have warned me."

"Then he knows you? Let us walk. What is it that you want? What do you think of my garden?"

His inquiries after my needs and of his garden were simultaneous. To any other person I should have answered that I did

not know anything about gardening, but this would have been equivalent to refusing to answer the question; and no monarch, even if he be a philosopher, could endure that. I therefore replied that I thought the garden superb.

"But," he said, "the gardens of Versailles are much finer."

"Yes, sire, but that is chiefly on account of the fountains."

"True, but it is not my fault; there is no water here. I have spent more than three hundred thousand crowns to get water, but unsuccessfully."

"Three hundred thousand crowns, sire! If your majesty had spent them all at once, the fountains should be here."

"Oh, oh! I see you are acquainted with hydraulics."

I could not say that he was mistaken, for fear of offending him, so I simply bent my head, which might mean either yes or no. Thank God the king did not trouble to test my knowledge of the science of hydraulics, with which I was totally unacquainted.

He kept on the move all the time, and as he turned his head from one side to the other hurriedly asked me what forces Venice could put into the field in war time.

"Twenty men-of-war, sire, and a number of galleys."

"What are the land forces?"

"Seventy thousand men, sire; all of whom are subjects of the Republic, and assessing each village at one man."

"That is not true; no doubt you wish to amuse me by telling me these fables. Give me your opinion on taxation."

This was the first conversation I had ever had with a monarch. I made a rapid review of the situation, and found myself much in the same position as an actor of the improvised comedy of the Italians, who is greeted by the hisses of the gods if he stops short a moment. I therefore replied with all the airs of a doctor of finance that I could say something about the theory of taxation.

"That's what I want," he replied, "for the practice is no business of yours."

"There are three kinds of taxes, considered as to their effects. The first is ruinous, the second a necessary evil, and the third invariably beneficial."

"Good! Go on."

"The ruinous impost is the royal tax, the necessary is the military, and the beneficial is the popular."

As I had not given the subject any thought I was in a disagreeable position, for I was obliged to go on speaking, and yet not to talk nonsense.

"The royal tax, sire, is that which deplenishes the purses of the subject to fill the coffers of the king."

"And that kind of tax is always ruinous, you think."

"Always, sire; it prevents the circulation of money — the soul of commerce and the mainstay of the state."

"But if the tax be levied to keep up the strength of the army, you say it is a necessary evil."

"Yes, it is necessary and yet evil, for war is an evil."

"Quite so; and now about the popular tax."

"This is always a benefit, for the monarch takes with one hand and gives with the other; he improves towns and roads, founds schools, protects the sciences, cherishes the arts; in fine, he directs this tax towards improving the condition and increasing the happiness of his people."

"There is a good deal of truth in that. I suppose you know Calsabigi?"

"I ought to, your majesty, as he and I established the Genoa Lottery at Paris seven years ago."

"In what class would you put this taxation, for you will agree that it is taxation of a kind?"

"Certainly, sire, and not the least important. It is beneficial when the monarch spends his profits for the good of the people."

"But the monarch may lose?"

"Once in fifty."

"Is that conclusion the result of a mathematical calculation?"

"Yes, sire."

"Such calculations often prove deceptive."

"Not so, may it please your majesty, when God remains neutral."

"What has God got to do with it?"

"Well, sire, we will call it destiny or chance."

"Good! I may possibly be of your opinion as to the calculation, but I don't like your Genoese Lottery. It seems to me an elaborate swindle, and I would have nothing more to do with it, even if it were positively certain that I should never lose."

"Your majesty is right, for the confidence which makes the people risk their money in a lottery is perfectly fallacious."

This was the end of our strange dialogue, and stopping before a building he looked me over, and then, after a short silence, observed:

"Do you know that you are a fine man?"

"Is it possible that, after the scientific conversation we have had, your majesty should select the least of the qualities which adorn your lifeguardsmen for remark?"

The king smiled kindly, and said:

"As you know Marshal Keith, I will speak to him of you."

With that he took off his hat, and bade me farewell. I retired with a profound bow.

Three or four days after, the marshal gave me the agreeable news that I had found favour in the king's eyes, and that his majesty thought of employing me.

I was curious to learn the nature of this employment, and being in no kind of hurry I resolved to await events in Berlin. The time passed pleasantly enough, for I was either with Calsabigi, Baron Treidel, or my landlady, and when these resources failed me, I used to walk in the park, musing over the events of my life.

Calsabigi had no difficulty in obtaining permission to continue the lottery on his own account, and he boldly announced that henceforward he would conduct the lottery on his own risk. His audacity was crowned with success, and he obtained a profit of a hundred thousand crowns. With this he paid most of his debts, and gave his mistress ten thousand crowns, she returning the document entitling her to that amount. After this lucky drawing it was easy to find guarantors, and the lottery went on successfully for two or three years.

Nevertheless Calsabigi ended by becoming bankrupt and died poor enough in Italy. He might be compared to the Danaides; the more he got the more he spent. His mistress eventually made a respectable marriage and returned to Paris, where she lived in comfort.

At the period of which I am speaking, the Duchess of Brunswick, the king's sister, came to pay him a visit. She was accompanied by her daughter who married the Crown Prince of Prussia in the following year. I saw the king in a suit of lustring trimmed with gold lace, and black silk stockings on his legs. He looked truly comic, and more like a theatrical heavy father

than a great king. He came into the hall with his sister on his arm and attracted universal attention, for only very old men could remember seeing him without his uniform and top-boots.

One evening at the theatre he recognises in Madame Denis, the prima ballerina, *one of his earliest loves, dating from the days when he was still a pupil at Dr. Gozzi's and she the little daughter of Pantaloon. Together they evoke their childish idyll, which they decide to continue on a more substantial basis. Having thus satisfactorily settled the essential business of finding a mistress, he proceeds to take in the principal sights of the town:*

Some days after, Madame Denis took me to Potsdam to show me all the sights of the town. Our intimacy offended no one, for she was generally believed to be my niece, and the general who kept her either believed the report, or like a man of sense pretended to believe it.

Amongst other notable things I saw at Potsdam was the sight of the king commanding the first battalion of his grenadiers, all picked men, the flower of the Prussian army.

The room which we occupied at the inn faced a walk by which the king passed when he came from the castle. The shutters were all closed, and our landlady told us that on one occasion when a pretty dancer called La Reggiana was sleeping in the same room, the king had seen her *in puris naturalibus*. This was too much for his modesty, and he had ordered the shutters to be closed, and closed they had remained, though this event was four years old. The king had some cause to fear, for he had been severely treated by La Barbarina. In the king's bedroom we saw her portrait, that of La Cochois, sister to the actress who became Marchioness d'Argens, and that of Maria Theresa, with whom Frederick had been in love, or rather he had been in love with the idea of becoming emperor. After we had admired the beauty and elegance of the castle, we could not help admiring the way in which the master of the castle was lodged. He had a mean room, and slept on a little bed with a screen around it. There was no dressing-gown and no slippers. The valet showed us an old cap which the king put on when he had a cold; it looked as if it must be very uncomfortable. His majesty's bureau was a table covered with pens, paper, half-burnt manuscripts, and an ink-pot; beside it was a sofa. The valet told us that these manuscripts contained the history of the last Prussian

war, and the king had been so annoyed by their accidentally getting burnt that he had resolved to have no more to do with the work. He probably changed his mind, for the book, which is little esteemed, was published shortly after his death.

Five or six weeks after my curious conversation with the monarch, Marshal Keith told me that his majesty had been pleased to create me a tutor to the new corps of Pomeranian cadets which he was just establishing. There were to be fifteen cadets and five tutors, so that each should have the care of three pupils. The salary was six hundred crowns and board found. The duty of the tutors was to follow or accompany the cadets wherever they went, Court included. I had to be quick in making up my mind, for the four others were already installed, and his majesty did not like to be kept waiting. I asked Lord Keith where the college was, and I promised to give him a reply by the next day.

I had to summon all my powers of self-restraint to my assistance when I heard this extravagant proposal as coming from a man who was so discreet in most things, but my astonishment was increased when I saw the abode of these fifteen young noblemen of rich Pomerania. It consisted of three or four great rooms almost devoid of furniture, several whitewashed bedrooms, containing a wretched bed, a deal table, and two deal chairs. The young cadets, boys of twelve or thirteen, all looked dirty and untidy, and were boxed up in a wretched uniform which matched admirably their rude and rustic faces. They were in company with their four governors, whom I took for their servants, and who looked at me in a stupefied manner, not daring to think that I was to be their future colleague.

Just as I was going to bid an eternal farewell to this abode of misery, one of the governors put his head out of the window and exclaimed:

"The king is riding up."

I could not avoid meeting him, and besides, I was glad enough to see him again, especially in such a place.

His majesty came up with his friend Icilius, examined everything, and saw me, but did not honour me with a word. I was elegantly dressed, and wore my cross set with brilliants. But I had to bite my lips so as not to burst out laughing when Frederick the Great got in a towering rage at a chamber utensil

which stood beside one of the beds, and which did not appear to be in a very cleanly condition.

"Whose bed is this?" cried the monarch.

"Mine, sire," answered a trembling cadet.

"Good! but it is not you I am angry with; where is your governor?"

The fortunate governor presented himself, and the monarch, after honouring him with the title of *blockhead*, proceeded to scold him roundly. However, he ended by saying that there was a servant, and that the governor ought to see that he did his work properly.

This disgusting scene was enough for me, and I hastened to call on Marshal Keith to announce my determination. The old soldier laughed at the description I gave him of the academy, and said I was quite right to despise such an office, but that I ought, nevertheless, to go and thank the king before I left Berlin. I said I did not feel inclined for another interview with such a man, and he agreed to present my thanks and excuses in my stead.

I made up my mind to go to Russia, and began my preparations in good earnest. Baron Treidel supported my resolve by offering to give me a letter of introduction to his sister, the Duchess of Courland. I wrote to M. de Bragadin to give me a letter for a banker at St. Petersburg, and to remit me through him every month a sum which would keep me in comfort.

Baron Bodisson, a Venetian who wanted to sell the king a picture by Andrea del Sarto, asked me to come with him to Potsdam and the desire of seeing the monarch once again made me accept the invitation. When I reached Potsdam I went to see the parade at which Frederick was nearly always to be found. When he saw me he came up and asked me in a familiar manner when I was going to start for St. Petersburg.

"In five or six days, if your majesty has no objection."

"I wish you a pleasant journey; but what do you hope to do in that land?"

"What I hoped to do in this land — namely, to please the sovereign."

"Have you got an introduction to the empress?"

"No, but I have an introduction to a banker."

"Ah! that's much better. If you pass through Prussia on

your return I shall be delighted to hear of your adventures in Russia."

"Farewell, sire."

Such was the second interview I had with this great king, whom I never saw again.

Arriving at Mitau, the capital of the dukedom of Courland, with six horses to his carriage and three ducats in his pocket, he ingratiates himself with the old duke by pretending to be an authority on mining, accompanies the latter on a tour of inspection of the mineral mines, which need developing, and, thanks to his manservant Lambert, who has had some training as an engineer, acquits himself so well of his task as expert adviser that he is handsomely rewarded for his services by the duke, who also gives him a letter to his son, Charles-Ernest de Biron, general of a Russian infantry regiment, then in garrison at Riga. This introduction was worth more to Casanova than the ducal thalers, for in Charles-Ernest, Prince of Courland, he met a man after his own heart.[1] *Already the young general had formed a gambling association with a trio of more or less illustrious and quite unscrupulous adventurers, one of*

[1] *Ernest-Charles de Biron, younger son of the reigning Duke of Courland, ex-regent of Russia, is the type of the high-born swindler so often to be met with in Casanova's day. The friendship between the prince and the adventurer, which started at Riga, was maintained for many years. When, three years after the Riga meeting, the prince was arrested in Paris for swindling and forgery and transferred to the Bastille, a number of letters from Casanova were seized among his papers. Of these unfortunately only summaries were preserved among the police archives, with the exception of one curious letter, which, though unsigned, was attributed to the same source by the official hand which had to classify the prince's papers. This letter, which under the seal of the greatest secrecy sets forth in detail a process for making gold, bears the following marginal note:* "Casanova est un illustre fripon, exilé du royaume le 6 novembre 1767. La pièce mentionnée ci-contre et plusieurs lettres dont il sera parlé plus bas constatent une partie des faits qui le concernent. Il ne serait pas indifférent de voir le dossier de ce particulier." *Unfortunately nothing else seems to have been discovered by the officials, judging from a note added to the one mentioned. The letter with its notes was discovered after the capture of the Bastille and published shortly afterwards — the word* 'fripon' *in the note having been tactfully altered to* 'aventurier' — *in the* Mémoires historiques et authentiques sur la Bastille, *by Carra. The book, which had a great success, inspired the* Journal de Paris *with an article on the Prince of Courland and his relations with Casanova, echoes of which reached Bohemia and the circle at Dux. Far from denying the authorship of the letter, Count Waldstein's librarian with characteristic effrontery declares:* "Pour moi, je m'en fais un honneur immortel," *and himself reproduces the text of the letter. (See:* Mémoires, *Garnier edition, Vol. VII.)*

them being Campioni, the Italian dancer, an old acquaintance of our hero's. It was natural, under these circumstances, that Riga offered especial attractions and opportunities, which Casanova was not the man to forgo. A two-months' sojourn was not too much to exhaust these, but two of the bank-holders of the aforesaid association — which, needless to say, Casanova had joined — having had to decamp, the latter also decided to continue his travels eastward.

At Riga Casanova has his first glimpse of the great Catherine:

Catherine II., wishing to show herself to her new subjects, over whom she was in reality supreme, though she had put the ghost of a king in the person of Stanislas Poniatowski, her former favourite, on the throne of Poland, came to Riga, and it was then I saw this great sovereign for the first time. I was a witness of the kindness and affability with which she treated the Livonian nobility, and of the way in which she kissed the young ladies, who had come to kiss her hand, upon the mouth. She was surrounded by the Orloffs and by other nobles who had assisted in placing her on the throne. For the comfort and pleasure of her loyal subjects the empress graciously expressed her intention of holding a bank at faro of ten thousand roubles.

Instantly the table and the cards were brought forward, and the piles of gold placed in order. She took the cards, pretended to shuffle them, and gave them to the first comer to cut. She had the pleasure of seeing her bank broken at the first deal, and indeed this result was to be expected, as anybody not an absolute idiot could see how the cards were going. The next day the empress set out for Mitau, where triumphal arches were erected in her honour. They were made of wood, as stone is scarce in Poland, and indeed there would not have been time to build stone arches.

The day after her arrival great alarm prevailed, for news came that a revolution was ready to burst out at St. Petersburg, and some even said that it had begun. The rebels wished to have forth from his prison the hapless Ivan Ivanovitz, who had been proclaimed emperor in his cradle, and dethroned by Elizabeth Petrovna. Two officers to whom the guardianship of the prince had been confided had killed the poor innocent monarch when they saw that they would be overpowered.

The assassination of the innocent prince created such a sensation that the wary Panin, fearing for the results, sent courier

after courier to the empress urging her to return to St. Petersburg and show herself to the people. Catherine was thus obliged to leave Mitau twenty-four hours after she had entered it, and after hastening back to the capital she arrived only to find that the excitement had entirely subsided. For politic reasons the assassins of the wretched Ivan were rewarded, and the bold man who had endeavoured to rise by her fall was beheaded.

He is to see more of the empress very shortly, for he is soon on his way to St. Petersburg:

I left Riga with the thermometer indicating fifteen degrees of frost, but though I travelled day and night, not leaving the carriage for the sixty hours for which my journey lasted, I did not feel the cold in the least. I had taken care to pay all the stages in advance and Marshal Braun, Governor of Livonia, had given me the proper passport. On the box seat was a French servant who had begged me to allow him to wait on me for the journey in return for a seat beside the coachman. He kept his word and served me well, and though he was but ill clad he bore the horrible cold for two days and three nights without appearing to feel it. It is only a Frenchman who can bear such trials; a Russian in similar attire would have been frozen to death in twenty-four hours, despite plentiful doses of corn brandy.

I lost sight of this individual when I arrived at St. Petersburg, but I met him again three months after, richly dressed, and occupying a seat beside mine at the table of M. de Czernitscheff. He was the *uchitel* of the young count, who sat beside him. But I shall have occasion to speak more at length of the office of *uchitel*, or tutor, in Russia.

As for Lambert, who was beside me in the carriage, he did nothing but eat, drink, and sleep the whole way; seldom speaking, for he stammered, and could only talk about mathematical problems, on which I was not always in the humour to converse. He was never amusing, never had any sensible observation to make on the varied scenes through which we passed; in short, he was a fool, and wearisome to all save himself.

I was only stopped once, and that was at Nawa, where the authorities demanded a passport, which I did not possess. I told the governor that as I was a Venetian, and only travelled for pleasure, I did not conceive a passport would be necessary, my Republic not being at war with any other power, and Russia having no embassy at Venice.

"Nevertheless," I added, "if your excellency wills it I will turn back; but I shall complain to Marshal Braun, who gave me the passport for posting, knowing that I had not the political passport."

After rubbing his forehead for a minute, the governor gave me a pass, which I still possess, and which brought me into St. Petersburg, without my having to allow the custom-house officers to inspect my trunks.

Between Koporie and St. Petersburg there is only a wretched hut for the accommodation of travellers. The country is a wilderness, and the inhabitants do not even speak Russian. The district is called Ingria, and I believe the jargon spoken has no affinity with any other language. The principal occupation of the peasants is robbery, and the traveller does well not to leave any of his effects alone for a moment.

I got to St. Petersburg just as the first rays of the sun began to gild the horizon. It was in the winter solstice, and the sun rose at the extremity of an immense plain at twenty-four minutes past nine, so I am able to state that the longest night in Russia consists of eighteen hours and three-quarters.

I got down in a fine street called the Millione. I found a couple of empty rooms, which the people of the house furnished with two beds, four chairs, and two small tables, and rented to me very cheaply. Seeing the enormous stoves, I concluded they must consume a vast amount of wood, but I was mistaken. Russia is the land of stoves as Venice is that of cisterns. I have inspected the interior of these stoves in summer-time as minutely as if I wished to find out the secret of making them; they are twelve feet high by six broad, and are capable of warming a vast room. They are only refuelled once in twenty-four hours, for as soon as the wood is reduced to the state of charcoal a valve is shut in the upper part of the stove.

It is only in the houses of noblemen that the stoves are refuelled twice a day, because servants are strictly forbidden to close the valve, and for a very good reason.

If a gentleman chance to come home and order his servants to warm his room before he goes to bed, and if the servant is careless enough to close the valve before the wood is reduced to charcoal, then the master sleeps his last sleep, being suffocated in three or four hours. When the door is opened in the morning

he is found dead, and the poor devil of a servant is immediately hanged, whatever he may say. This sounds severe, and even cruel; but it is a necessary regulation, or else a servant would be able to get rid of his master on the smallest provocation.

After I had made an agreement for my board and lodging, both of which were very cheap (now St. Petersburg is as dear as London), I bought some pieces of furniture which were necessaries for me, but which were not as yet much in use in Russia, such as a commode, a bureau, etc.

German is the language principally spoken in St. Petersburg, and I did not speak German much better then than I do now, so I had a good deal of difficulty in making myself understood, and usually excited my auditors to laughter.

After dinner my landlord told me that the Court was giving a masked ball to five thousand persons to last sixty hours. He gave me a ticket, and told me I only needed to show it at the entrance of the imperial palace.

I decided to use the ticket, for I felt that I should like to be present at so numerous an assembly, and as I had my domino still by me a mask was all I wanted. I went to the palace in a sedan-chair, and found an immense crowd assembled, and dancing going on in several halls, in each of which an orchestra was stationed. There were long counters loaded with eatables and drinkables at which those who were hungry or thirsty ate or drank as much as they liked. Gaiety and freedom reigned everywhere, and the light of a thousand wax-candles illuminated the hall. Everything was wonderful, and all the more so from its contrast with the cold and darkness that were without. All at once I heard a masquer beside me say to another:

"There's the czarina."

We soon saw Gregory Orloff, for his orders were to follow the empress at a distance.

I followed the masquer, and I was soon persuaded that it was really the empress, for everybody was repeating it, though no one openly recognised her. Those who really did not know her jostled her in the crowd, and I imagined that she would be delighted at being treated thus, as it was a proof of the success of her disguise. Several times I saw her speaking in Russian to one masquer and another. No doubt she exposed her vanity to some rude shocks, but she had also the inestimable advantage of hearing truths

which her courtiers would certainly not tell her. The masquer who was pronounced to be Orloff followed her everywhere, and did not let her out of his sight for a moment. He could not be mistaken, as he was an exceptionally tall man and had a peculiar carriage of the head.

Among the masquers Casanova discovers to his delight one of the most cherished of his Parisian amours, Madame Baret, the mercer's wife, now fairly launched in the gallant world as Madame de l'Anglade, mistress of the Polish ambassador and by profession an actress, though, as she herself admits, she can neither act nor sing. As her protector has just left her, she counts on Casanova to get her out of the country.

Despite the Orloff decree against gaming, Casanova finds no difficulty in indulging in his favourite and essential pastime. His remarks on the conditions under which it was carried on have the value of expert opinion:

I played for small stakes and won a few roubles. I made friends with Baron Lefort at supper, and he afterwards told me of the vicissitudes he had experienced.

As I was praising the noble calmness with which a certain prince had lost a thousand roubles to him, he laughed and said that the fine gamester I had mentioned played upon credit but never paid.

"How about his honour?"

"It is not affected by the non-payment of gaming debts. It is an understood thing in Russia that one who plays on credit and loses may pay or not pay as he wishes, and the winner only makes himself ridiculous by reminding the loser of his debt."

"Then the holder of the bank has the right to refuse to accept bets which are not backed by ready money."

"Certainly; and nobody has a right to be offended with him for doing so. Gaming is in a very bad state in Russia. I know young men of the highest rank whose chief boast is that they know how to conquer fortune; that is, to cheat. One of the Matuschkins goes so far as to challenge all foreign cheats to master him. He has just received permission to travel for three years, and it is an open secret that he wishes to travel that he may exercise his skill. He intends returning to Russia laden with the spoils of the dupes he has made."

St. Petersburg was swarming with adventurers of every nation-

ality, for with the recent accession to the throne of the "Semiramis of the North," the new capital of Russia was becoming a veritable land of Cockaigne for the demi-monde *of Europe. What a happy change for our hero after the austerity and pettiness of most of the German capitals, and how Voltaire's "Our light comes from the north!" must have found an echo in his heart! He is soon in the thick of things, making new acquaintances and renewing with the old ones he meets at every turn the oft-tried* combinazioni *in which he excels. He is quick also to adopt local customs, as witness the following:*

As I was walking away from Catherinhoff with Zinowieff I noticed a young country-woman whose beauty astonished me. I pointed her out to the young officer, and we made for her; but she fled away with great activity to a little cottage, where we followed her. We went in and saw the father, mother, and some children, and in a corner the timid form of the fair maiden.

Zinowieff (who, by the way, was for twenty years Russian ambassador at Madrid) had a long conversation in Russian with the father. I did not understand what was said, but I guessed it referred to the girl because, when her father called her, she advanced submissively, and stood modestly before us.

The conversation over, Zinowieff went out, and I followed him after giving the master of the house a rouble. Zinowieff told me what had passed, saying that he had asked the father if he would let him have the daughter as a maid-servant, and the father had replied that it should be so with all his heart, but that he must have a hundred roubles for her, as she was still a virgin. "So you see," added Zinowieff, "the matter is quite simple."

"How simple?"

"Why, yes; only a hundred roubles."

"And supposing me to be inclined to give that sum?"

"Then she would be your servant, and you could do anything you liked with her, except kill her."

"And supposing she is not willing?"

"That never happens, but if it did you could have her beaten."

"Well, if she is satisfied and I enjoy her, can I still continue to keep her?"

"You will be her master, I tell you, and can have her arrested if she attempts to escape, unless she can return the hundred roubles you gave for her."

"What must I give her per month?"

"Nothing, except enough to eat and drink. You must also let her go to the baths on Saturday and to the church on Sunday."

"Can I make her come with me when I leave St. Petersburg?"

"No, unless you obtain permission and find a surety, for though the girl would be your slave she would still be a slave to the empress."

"Very good; then will you arrange this matter for me? I will give the hundred roubles, and I promise you I will not treat her as a slave. But I hope you will care for my interests, as I do not wish to be duped."

"I promise you you shall not be duped; I will see to everything. Would you like her now?"

"No, to-morrow."

Balsamo Cagliostro, evidently scenting an affinity, gives Casanova proofs of his powers of counterfeiting with brush and pen, which border on the marvellous. "You ought to make this talent serve you in good stead," Casanova remarks approvingly, adding the warning, "but be careful, or it may cost you your life." [1] *Ten years later they met again. The promised record of this meeting between the two great adventurers — Cagliostro then in all his glory, Casanova at his lowest depth — is unfortunately not included in the Memoirs. If a link between the two great mystifiers of the eighteenth century, the Count of St. Germain and the Count of Cagliostro (by some held to be one and the same person) can be established, it is possible that the Chevalier de Seingalt helped to forge it.*

We returned to St. Petersburg in a phaeton, and the next day at nine o'clock I called on Zinowieff, who said he was delighted to do me this small service. On the way he said that if I liked he could get me a perfect seraglio of pretty girls in a few days.

"No," said I, "one is enough." And I gave him the hundred roubles.

We arrived at the cottage, where we found the father, mother, and daughter. Zinowieff explained his business crudely enough,

[1] *In the last volume of the Memoirs, Casanova, then over seventy years of age, refers to this meeting. "Twenty years ago," he observes, "I told Cagliostro (who called himself Count Pellegrini in those days) not to set foot in Rome, and if he had followed this counsel he would not have died miserably in a Roman prison."*

after the custom of the country, and the father thanked St. Nicholas for the good luck he had sent him. He spoke to his daughter, who looked at me and softly uttered the necessary *yes*.

Zinowieff then gave the hundred roubles to the father, who handed them to his daughter, and she only took them to return them to her mother. My servant and coachman were then called in to witness an arrangement of which they knew nothing.

I called her Zaira, and she got into the carriage and returned with me to St. Petersburg in her coarse clothes, without a chemise of any kind. After I had dropped Zinowieff at his lodging I went home, and for four days I was engaged in collecting and arranging my slave's toilet, not resting till I had dressed her modestly in the French style. In less than three months she had learnt enough Italian to tell me what she wanted and to understand me. She soon loved me, and afterwards she got jealous. But we shall hear more of her.

This is what we hear (Casanova, it should be remarked, has been out all night celebrating in Franco-Russian fashion):

I got home, and, fortunately for myself, escaped the bottle which Zaira flung at my head, and which would infallibly have killed me if it had hit me. She threw herself on to the ground, and began to strike it with her forehead. I thought she had gone mad, and wondered whether I had better call for assistance; but she became quiet enough to call me assassin and traitor, with all the other abusive epithets that she could remember. To convict me of my crime she showed me twenty-five cards, placed in order, and on them she displayed the various enormities of which I had been guilty.

I let her go on till her rage was somewhat exhausted, and then, having thrown her divining apparatus into the fire, I looked at her in pity and anger, and said that we must part the next day, as she had narrowly escaped killing me. I confessed that I had been with Bomback, and that there had been a girl in the house; but I denied all the other sins of which she accused me. I then went to sleep without taking the slightest notice of her, in spite of all she said and did to prove her repentance.

I woke after a few hours to find her sleeping soundly, and I began to consider how I could best rid myself of the girl, who would probably kill me if we continued living together. Whilst I

was absorbed in these thoughts she awoke, and falling at my feet wept and professed her utter repentance, and promised never to touch another card as long as I kept her.

At last I could resist her entreaties no longer, so I took her in my arms and forgave her; and we did not part till she had received undeniable proofs of the return of my affection. I intended to start for Moscow in three days, and she was delighted when she heard she was to go.

Three circumstances had won me this young girl's furious affection. In the first place I often took her to see her family, with whom I always left a rouble; in the second I made her eat with me; and in the third I had beaten her three of four times when she had tried to prevent me going out.

In Russia beating is a matter of necessity, for words have no force whatever. A servant, mistress, or courtesan understands nothing but the lash. Words are altogether thrown away, but a few good strokes are entirely efficacious. The servant, whose soul is still more enslaved than his body, reasons somewhat as follows, after he has had a beating:

"My master has not sent me away, but beaten me; therefore he loves me, and I ought to be attached to him."

It is the same with the Russian soldier, and in fact with everybody. Honour stands for nothing, but with the knout and brandy one can get anything from them except heroical enthusiasm.

Papanelopulo laughed at me when I said that as I liked my Cossack I should endeavour to correct him with words only, when he took too much brandy.

"If you do not beat him," he said, "he will end by beating you"; and he spoke the truth.

One day, when he was so drunk as to be unable to attend on me, I began to scold him, and threatened him with the stick if he did not mend his ways. As soon as he saw my cane lifted, he ran at me and got hold of it; and if I had not knocked him down immediately, he would doubtless have beaten me. I dismissed him on the spot. There is not a better servant in the world than a Russian. He works without ceasing, sleeps in front of the door of his master's bedroom to be always ready to fulfil his orders, never answering his reproaches, incapable of theft. But after drinking a little too much brandy he becomes a perfect monster; and drunkenness is the vice of the whole nation.

A coachman knows no other way of resisting the bitter cold to which he is exposed, than by drinking rye brandy. It sometimes happens that he drinks till he falls asleep, and then there is no awaking for him in this world. Unless one is very careful, it is easy to lose an ear, the nose, a cheek, or a lip by frost bites. One day as I was walking out on a bitterly cold day, a Russian noticed that one of my ears was frozen. He ran up to me and rubbed the affected part with a handful of snow till the circulation was restored. I asked him how he had noticed my state, and he said he had remarked the livid whiteness of my ear, and this, he said, was always a sign that the frost had taken it. What surprised me most of all is that sometimes the part grows again after it has dropped off. Prince Charles of Courland assured me that he had lost his nose in Siberia, and that it had grown again the next summer. I have been assured of the truth of this by several Russians.

It had been announced that a magnificent tournament, to which all the nobility of Russia were invited, was to inaugurate the huge new amphitheatre built by the Italian architect Rinaldini at St. Petersburg. But owing to the persistent bad weather, the fête had to be postponed and with it the arrival of that "dear Prince of Courland" with whom Casanova doubtless intended improving that very shining hour. To console himself for this disappointment Casanova takes his Zaira for a trip to Moscow:

Having made all arrangements for my journey to Moscow, I got into my sleeping carriage with Zaira, having a servant behind who could speak both Russian and German. For twenty-four roubles the *chevochic* (hirer out of horses) engaged to carry me to Moscow in six days and seven nights with six horses. This struck me as being extremely cheap. The distance is seventy-two Russian stages, almost equivalent to five hundred Italian miles, or a hundred and sixty French leagues.

We set out just as a cannon shot from the citadel announced the close of day. It was towards the end of May, in which month there is literally no night at St. Petersburg. Without the report of the cannon no one would be able to tell when the day ended and the night began. One can read a letter at midnight, and the moonlight makes no appreciable difference. This continual day lasts for eight weeks, and during that time no one lights a candle. At Moscow it is different; a candle is always necessary at midnight if one wishes to read.

We reached Novgorod in forty-eight hours, and here the *chevochic* allowed us a rest of five hours. I saw a circumstance there which surprised me very much, though one has no business to be surprised at anything if one travels much, and especially in a land of half savages. I asked the *chevochic* to drink, but he appeared to be in great melancholy. I inquired what was the matter and he told Zaira that one of his horses had refused to eat, and that it was clear that if he could not eat he could not work. We followed him into the stable, and found the horse looking oppressed by care, its head lowered and motionless; it had evidently got no appetite. His master began a pathetic oration, looking tenderly at the animal, as if to arouse it to a sense of duty, and then taking its head, and kissing it lovingly, he put it into the manger, but to no purpose. Then the man began to weep bitterly, but in such a way that I had the greatest difficulty to prevent myself laughing, for I could see that he wept in the hope that his tears might soften the brute's heart. When he had wept some time he again put the horse's head into the manger, but again to no purpose. At this he got furious and swore to be avenged. He led the horse out of the stable, tied it to a post, and beat it with a thick stick for a quarter of an hour so violently that my heart bled for the poor animal. At last the *chevochic* was tired out, and taking the horse back to the stable he fastened up his head once more, and to my astonishment it began to devour its provender with the greatest appetite. At this the master jumped for joy, laughed, sang, and committed a thousand extravagancies, as if to show the horse how happy it had made him. I was beside myself with astonishment, and concluded that such treatment would have succeeded nowhere but in Russia, where the stick seems to be the panacea or universal medicine.

They tell me, however, that the stick is gradually going out of fashion. Peter the Great used to beat his generals black and blue, and in his days a lieutenant had to receive with all submission the cuffs of his captain, who bent before the blows of his major, who did the same to his colonel, who received chastisement from his general. So I was informed by old General Woyakoff, who was a pupil of Peter the Great, and had often been beaten by the great emperor, the founder of St. Petersburg.

It seems to me that I have scarcely said anything about

this great and famous capital, which in my opinion is built on somewhat precarious foundations. No one but Peter could have thus given the lie to nature by building his immense palaces of marble and granite on mud and shifting sand. They tell me that the town is now in its manhood, to the honour of the great Catherine; but in the year 1765 it was still in its minority, and seemed to me only to have been built with the childish aim of seeing it fall into ruins. Streets were built with certainty of having to repair them in six months' time. The whole place proclaimed itself to be the whim of a despot. If it is to be durable constant care will be required, for nature never gives up its rights and reasserts them when the constraint of man is withdrawn. My theory is that sooner or later the soil must give way and drag the vast city with it.

We reached Moscow in the time the *chevochic* had promised. As the same horses were used for the whole journey, it would have been impossible to travel more quickly. A Russian told me that the Empress Elizabeth had done the journey in fifty-two hours.

"You mean that she issued a ukase to the effect that she had done it," said a Russian of the old school; "and if she had liked she could have travelled more quickly still; it was only a question of the wording of the ukase."

Even when I was in Russia it was not allowable to doubt the infallibility of a ukase, and to do so was equivalent to high treason. One day I was crossing a canal at St. Petersburg by a small wooden bridge; Melissino, Papanelopulo, and some other Russians were with me. I began to abuse the wooden bridge, which I characterised as both mean and dangerous. One of my companions said that on such a day it would be replaced by a fine stone bridge, as the empress had to pass there on some state occasion. The day named was three weeks off, and I said plainly that it was impossible. One of the Russians looked askance at me, and said there was no doubt about it, as a ukase had been published ordering that the bridge should be built. I was going to answer him but Papanelopulo gave my hand a squeeze, and whispered "*Taci!*" (hush).

The bridge was not built, but I was not justified, for the empress published another ukase in which she declared it to be her gracious pleasure that the bridge should not be built till the

following year. If anyone would see what a pure despotism is like, let him go to Russia.

The Russian sovereigns use the language of despotism on all occasions. One day I saw the empress, dressed in man's clothes, going out for a ride. Her master of the horse, Prince Repnin, held the bridle of the horse, which suddenly gave him a kick which broke his ankle-bone. The empress instantly ordained that the horse should be taken away, and that no one should mount it again under pain of death. All official positions in Russia have military rank assigned to them, and this sufficiently indicates the nature of the government. The coachman-in-chief of her imperial highness holds the rank of colonel, as also does her chief cook. The *castrato* Luini was a lieutenant-colonel and the painter Toretti only a captain, because he had only eight hundred roubles a year, while the coachman had three thousand. The sentinels at the doors of the palace have their muskets crossed, and ask those who wish to pass through what is their rank. When I was asked this question, I stopped short; but the quick-witted officer asked me how much I had a year, and on my replying, at a hazard, three thousand roubles, he gave me the rank of general and I was allowed to pass. I saw the czarina for a moment; she stopped at the door and took off her gloves to give her hands to be kissed by the officer and the two sentinels. But such means as this she had won the affection of the corps, commanded by Gregorius Gregorovitch Orloff, on which her safety depended in case of revolution.

I made the following notes when I saw the empress hearing mass in her chapel: The protopapa, or bishop, received her at the door to give her the holy water, and she kissed his episcopal ring, while the prelate, whose beard was a couple of feet in length, lowered his head to kiss the hands of his temporal sovereign and spiritual head, for in Russia the he or she on the throne is the spiritual as well as temporal head of the Church.

She did not evidence the least devotion during mass; hypocrisy did not seem to be one of her vices. Now she smiled at one of her suite, now at another, and occasionally she addressed the favourite, not because she had anything to say to him, but to make him an object of envy to the others.

One evening, as she was leaving the theatre where Metastasio's *Olympiade* had been performed, I heard her say:

"The music of that opera has given the greatest pleasure to everyone, so of course I am delighted with it; but it wearies me, nevertheless. Music is a fine thing, but I cannot understand how anyone who is seriously occupied can love it passionately. I will have Buranello here, and I wonder whether he will interest me in music, but I am afraid nature did not constitute me to feel all its charms."

She always argued in that way. In due time I will set down her words to me when I returned from Moscow. When I arrived at that city I got down at a good inn, where they gave me two rooms and a coach-house for my carriage. After dinner I hired a small carriage and a guide who could speak French. My carriage was drawn by four horses, for Moscow is a vast city composed of four distinct towns, and many of the streets are rough and ill paved. I had five or six letters of introduction, and I determined to take them all. I took Zaira with me, as she was as curious to see everything as a girl of fourteen naturally is. I do not remember what feast the Greek Church was keeping on that day, but I shall never forget the terrific bell-ringing with which my ears were assailed, for there are churches everywhere. The country people were engaged in sowing their grain, to reap it in September. They laughed at our southern custom of sowing eight months earlier, as unnecessary and even prejudicial to the crops, but I do not know where the right lies. Perhaps we may both be right, for there is no master to compare with experience.

I took the introductions I had received from Narischkin, Prince Repnin, the worthy Papanelopulo, and Melissino's brother. The next morning the whole of the persons at whose houses I had left letters called on me. They all asked Zaira and myself to dinner, and I accepted the invitation of the first comer, M. Dimidoff, who promised to dine with the rest on the following days. Zaira, who had been tutored by me to some extent, was delighted to show me that she was worthy of the position she occupied. She was exquisitely dressed and won golden opinions everywhere, for our hosts did not care to inquire whether she were my daughter, my mistress, or my servant, for in this matter, as in many others, the Russians are excessively indulgent. Those who have not seen Moscow have not seen Russia, for the people of St. Petersburg are not really Russians at all. Their court manners are very different from their manners *au naturel*, and

it may be said with truth that the Russian is as a stranger in St. Petersburg. The citizens of Moscow, and especially the rich ones, speak with pity of those who, for one reason or another, had expatriated themselves; and with them to expatriate one's self is to leave Moscow, which they consider as their native land. They look on St. Petersburg with an envious eye, and call it the ruin of Russia. I do not know whether this is a just view to take of the case, I merely repeat what I have heard.

In the course of a week I saw all the sights of Moscow — the manufactures, the churches, the remains of the old days, the museums, the libraries (of no interest to my mind), not forgetting the famous bell. I noticed that their bells are not allowed to swing like ours, but are motionless, being rung by a rope attached to the clapper.

I thought the Moscow women more handsome than those of St. Petersburg, and I attribute this to the great superiority of the air. They are gentle and accessible by nature; and to obtain the favour of a kiss on the lips, one need only make a show of kissing their hands.

There was good fare in plenty, but no delicacy in its composition or arrangement. Their table is always open to friends and acquaintances, and a friend may bring in five or six persons to dinner, and even at the end of the meals you will never hear a Russian say, "We have had dinner; you have come too late." Their souls are not black enough for them to pronounce such words as these. Notice is given to the cook, and the dinner begins over again. They have a delicious drink, the name of which I do not remember; but it is much superior to the sherbet of Constantinople. The numerous servants are not given water, but a light, nourishing, and agreeable fluid, which may be purchased very cheaply. They all hold St. Nicholas in the greatest reverence, only praying to God through the mediation of this saint, whose picture is always suspended in the principal room of the house. A person coming in makes first a bow to the image and then a bow to the master, and if perchance the image is absent, the Russian, after gazing all round, stands confused and motionless, not knowing what to do. As a general rule the Muscovites are the most superstitious Christians in the world. Their liturgy is in Greek, of which the people understand nothing, and the clergy, themselves extremely ignorant, gladly leave

them completely in the dark on all matters connected with religion. I could never make them understand that the only reason for the Roman Christians making the sign of the Cross from left to right, is that we say *spiritus sancti*, while they say *agion pneuma*.

"If you said *pneuma agion*," I used to say, "then you would cross yourselves like us, and if we said *sancti spiritus* we should cross ourselves like you."

"The adjective," replied my interlocutor, "should always precede the substantive, for we should never utter the name of God without first giving Him some honourable epithet."

Such are nearly all the differences which divide the two Churches, without reckoning the numerous idle tales which they have as well as ourselves, and which are by no means the least cherished articles of their faith.

We returned to St. Petersburg by the way we had come, but Zaira would have liked me never to leave Moscow. She had become so much in love with me by force of constant association that I could not think without a pang of the moment of separation. The day after our arrival in the capital I took her to her home, where she showed her father all the little presents I had given her, and told him of the honour she had received as my daughter, which made the good man laugh heartily.

The first piece of news I heard was that a ukase had been issued, ordering the erection of a temple dedicated to God in the Moscöi opposite the house where I resided. The empress had entrusted Rinaldi, the architect, with the erection. He asked her what emblem he should put above the portal, and she replied:

"No emblem at all, only the name of God in large letters."

"I will put a triangle."

"No triangle at all; but only the name of God in whatever language you like, and nothing more."

The second piece of news was that Bomback had fled and had been captured at Mitau, where he believed himself in safety. M. de Simolia had arrested him. It was a grave case, for he had deserted; however, he was given his life, and sent into barracks at Kamstchatka. Crèvecœur and his mistress had departed, carrying some money with them, and a Florentine adventurer named Biliotti had fled with eighteen thousand roubles belonging

to Papanelopulo, but a certain Bori, the worthy Greek's factotum, had caught him at Mitau and brought him back to St. Petersburg, where he was now in prison. Prince Charles of Courland arrived about this time, and I hastened to call upon him as soon as he advised me of his coming. He was lodging in a house belonging to Count Dimidoff, who owned large iron mines, and had made the whole house of iron, from attic to basement. The prince had brought his mistress with him, but she was still in an ill-humour, and he was beginning to get heartily sick of her. The man was to be pitied, for he could not get rid of her without finding her a husband, and this husband became more difficult to find every day. When the prince saw how happy I was with my Zaira, he could not help thinking how easily happiness may be won; but the fatal desire for luxury and empty show spoils all, and renders the very sweets of life as bitter as gall.

I was indeed considered happy, and I liked to appear so, but in my heart I was wretched. Ever since my imprisonment under The Leads, I had been subject to hæmorrhoids, which came on three or four times a year. At St. Petersburg I had a serious attack, and the daily pain and anxiety embittered my existence. A vegetarian doctor called Senapios, for whom I had sent, gave me the sad news that I had a blind or incomplete fistula in the rectum, and according to him nothing but the cruel bistoury would give me any relief, and indeed he said I had no time to lose. I had to agree, in spite of my dislike to the operation; but fortunately the clever surgeon whom the doctor summoned pronounced that if I would have patience nature itself would give me relief. I had much to endure, especially from the severe dieting to which I was subjected, but which doubtless did me good.

Colonel Melissino asked me to be present at a review which was to take place at three versts from St. Petersburg, and was to be succeeded by a dinner to twenty-four guests, given by General Orloff. I went with the prince, and saw a cannon fired twenty times in a minute, testing the performance with my watch.

My neighbour at dinner was the French ambassador. Wishing to drink deeply, after the Russian fashion, and thinking the Hungarian wine as innocent as champagne, he drank so bravely

that at the end of dinner he had lost the use of his legs. Count Orloff made him drink still more, and then he fell asleep and was laid on a bed.

The gaiety of the meal gave me some idea of Russian wit. I did not understand the language, so M. Zinowieff translated the curious sallies to me while the applause they had raised was still resounding.

Melissino rose to his feet, holding a large goblet full of Hungarian wine in his hand. There was a general silence to listen to him. He drank the health of General Orloff in these words:

"May you die when you become rich."

The applause was general, for the allusion was to the unbounded generosity of Orloff. The general's reply struck me as better still, but it was equally rugged in character. He, too, took a full cup, and turning to Melissino, said:

"May you never die till I slay you!"

The applause was furious, for he was their host and their general.

The Russian wit is of the energetic kind, devoid of grace; all they care about is directness and vigour.

Voltaire had just sent the empress his *Philosophy of History*, which he had written for her and dedicated to her. A month after, an edition of three thousand copies came by sea, and was sold out in a week, for all the Russians who knew a little French were eager to possess a copy of the work. The leaders of the Voltaireans were two noblemen, named, respectively, Stroganoff and Schuvaloff. I had seen verses written by the former of these as good as Voltaire's own verses, and twenty years later I saw an ode by the latter of which Voltaire would not have been ashamed, but the subject was ill chosen; for it treated of the death of the great philosopher who had so studiously avoided using his pen on melancholy themes. In those days all Russians with any pretensions to literature read nothing but Voltaire, and when they had read all his writings they thought themselves as wise as their master. To me they seemed pigmies mimicking a giant. I told them that they ought to read all the books from which Voltaire had drawn his immense learning, and then, perhaps, they might become as wise as he. I remember the saying of a wise man at Rome: "Beware of the man of one book." I wonder whether the Russians are more profound now; but that is

a question I cannot answer. At Dresden I knew Prince Biloselski, who was on his way back to Russia after having been ambassador at Turin. He was the author of an admirable work on metaphysics, and the analysis of the soul and reason.

Count Panin was the tutor of Paul Petrovitch, heir-presumptive to the throne. The young prince had a severe master, and dared not even applaud an air at the opera unless he first received permission to do so from his mentor.

When a courier brought the news of the sudden death of Francis I., Emperor of Germany and of the Holy Roman Empire, the czarina being at Czarsko-Zelo, the count minister-tutor was in the palace with his pupil, then eleven years old. The courier came at noon, and gave the dispatch into the hands of the minister, who was standing in the midst of a crowd of courtiers of whom I was one. The prince imperial was at his right hand. The minister read the dispatch in a low voice, and then said:

"This is news indeed. The Emperor of the Romans has died suddenly."

He then turned to Paul, and said to him:

"Full court mourning, which your highness will observe for three months longer than the empress."

"Why so?" said Paul.

"Because, as Duke of Holstein, your highness has a right to attend the diet of the empire, a privilege," he added, turning to us, "which Peter the Great desired in vain."

I noted the attention with which the Grand Duke Paul listened to his mentor, and the care with which he concealed his joy at the news. I was immensely pleased with this way of giving instruction. I said as much to Prince Lobkowitz, who was standing by me, and he refined on my praises. This prince was popular with everyone. He was even preferred to his predecessor, Prince Esterhazy; and this was saying a great deal, for Esterhazy was adored in Russia. The gay and affable manner of Prince Lobkowitz made him the life and soul of all the parties at which he was present. He was a constant courtier of the Countess Braun, the reigning beauty, and everyone believed his love had been crowned with success, though no one could assert as much positively.

There was a great review held at a distance of twelve or four-

teen versts from St. Petersburg, at which the empress and all her train of courtiers were present. The houses of the two or three adjoining villages were so few and small that it would be impossible for all the company to find a lodging. Nevertheless I wished to be present, chiefly to please Zaira, who wanted to be seen with me on such an occasion. The review was to last three days; there were to be fireworks, and a mine was to be exploded besides the evolutions of the troops. I went in my travelling carriage, which would serve me for a lodging if I could get nothing better.

We arrived at the appointed place at eight o'clock in the morning; the evolutions lasted till noon. When they were over we went towards a tavern and had our meal served to us in the carriage, as all the rooms in the inn were full.

After dinner my coachman tried in vain to find me a lodging, so I disposed myself to sleep all night in the carriage; and so I did for the whole time of the review, and fared better than those who had spent so much money to be ill lodged. Melissino told me that the empress thought my idea a very sensible one. As I was the only person who had a sleeping carriage, which was quite a portable house in itself, I had numerous visitors, and Zaira was radiant to be able to do the honours.

I had a good deal of conversation during the review with Count Tott, brother of the nobleman who was employed at Constantinople, and known as Baron Tott. We had known each other at Paris, and afterwards at The Hague, where I had the pleasure of being of service to him. He had come to St. Petersburg with Madame de Soltikoff, whom he had met at Paris, and whose lover he was. He lived with her, went to Court, and was well received by everyone.

Two or three years after, the empress ordered him to leave St. Petersburg on account of the troubles in Poland. It was said that he kept up a correspondence with his brother, who was endeavouring to intercept the fleet under the command of Alexis Orloff. I never heard what became of him after he left Russia, where he obliged me with the loan of five hundred roubles, which I have not yet been able to return to him.

M. Maruzzi, by calling a Venetian merchant, and by birth a Greek, having left trade to live like a gentleman, came to St. Petersburg when I was there, and was presented at Court. He

was a fine-looking man, and was admitted to all the great houses. The empress treated him with distinction because she had thoughts of making him her agent at Venice. He paid his court to the Countess Braun, but he had rivals there who were not afraid of him. He was rich enough, but did not know how to spend his money; and avarice is a sin which meets with no pity from the Russian ladies.

I went to Czarsko-Zelo, Peterhoff, and Cronstadt, for if you want to say you have been in a country you should see as much as possible of it. I wrote notes and memorandums on several questions with the hope of them procuring me a place in the civil service, and all my productions were laid before the empress but with no effect. In Russia they do not think much of foreigners unless they have specially summoned them; those who come of their own account rarely make much, and I suspect the Russians are right.

I thought of leaving Russia at the beginning of the autumn, but I was told by MM. Panin and Alsuwieff that I ought not to go without having spoken to the empress.

"I should be sorry to do so," I replied, "but as I can't find anyone to present me to her, I must be resigned."

At last Panin told me to walk in a garden frequented by her majesty at an early hour, and he said that meeting me, as it were by chance, she would probably speak to me. I told him I should like him to be with her, and he accordingly named a day.

I repaired to the garden, and as I walked about I marvelled at the statuary it contained, all the statues being made of the worst stone, and executed in the worst possible taste. The names cut beneath them gave the whole the air of a practical joke. A weeping statue was Democritus; another, with grinning mouth, was labelled Heraclitus; an old man with a long beard was Sappho; and an old woman, Avicenna; and so on.

As I was smiling at this extraordinary collection, I saw the czarina, preceded by Count Gregorius Orloff, and followed by two ladies, approaching. Count Panin was on her left hand. I stood by the hedge to let her pass, but as soon as she came up to me she asked, smilingly, if I had been interested in the statues. I replied, following her steps, that I presumed they had been placed there to impose on fools, or to excite the laughter of those acquainted with history.

"From what I can make out," she replied, "the secret of the matter is that my worthy aunt was imposed on, and indeed she did not trouble herself much about such trifles. But I hope you have seen other things in Russia less ridiculous than these statues?"

I entertained the sovereign for more than an hour with my remarks on the things of note I had seen in St. Petersburg. The conversation happened to turn on the King of Prussia, and I sang his praises; but I censured his terrible habit of always interrupting the person whom he was addressing. Catherine smiled and asked me to tell her about the conversation I had had with this monarch, and I did so to the best of my ability. She was then kind enough to say that she had never seen me at the *Courtag*, which was a vocal and instrumental concert given at the palace, and open to all. I told her that I had only attended once, as I was so unfortunate as not to have a taste for music. At this she turned to Panin, and said smilingly that she knew someone else who had the same misfortune. If the reader remembers what I heard her say about music as she was leaving the opera, he will pronounce my speech to have been a very courtier-like one, and I confess it was; but who can resist making such speeches to a monarch, and above all, a monarch in petticoats?

The czarina turned from me to speak to M. Bezkoi, who had just come up, and as M. Panin left the garden I did so too, delighted with the honour I had had.

The empress, who was a woman of moderate height and yet of a majestic appearance, thoroughly understood the art of making herself loved. She was not beautiful, but yet she was sure of pleasing by her geniality and her wit, and also by that exquisite tact which made one forget the awfulness of the sovereign in the gentleness of the woman.

A few days after, Count Panin told me that the empress had twice asked after me, and that this was a sure sign I had pleased her. He advised me to look out for another opportunity of meeting her, and said that for the future she would always tell me to approach whenever she saw me, and that if I wanted some employment she might possibly do something for me.

Though I did not know what employ I could ask for in that disagreeable country, I was glad to hear that I could have easy access to the Court. With that idea I walked in the garden

every day, and here follows my second conversation with the empress: —

She saw me at a distance and sent an officer to fetch me into her presence. As everybody was talking of the tournament, which had to be postponed on account of the bad weather, she asked me if this kind of entertainment could be given at Venice. I told her some amusing stories on the subject of shows and spectacles, and in this relation I remarked that the Venetian climate was more pleasant than the Russian, for at Venice fine days were the rule, while at St. Petersburg they were the exception, though the year is younger there than anywhere else.

"Yes," she said, "in your country it is eleven days older."

"Would it not be worthy of your majesty to put Russia on an equality with the rest of the world in this respect, by adopting the Gregorian calendar? All the Protestants have done so, and England, who adopted it fourteen years ago, has already gained several millions. All Europe is astonished that the old style should be suffered to exist in a country where the sovereign is the head of the Church, and whose capital contains an academy of science. It is thought that Peter the Great, who made the year begin in January, would have also abolished the old style if he had not been afraid of offending England, which then kept trade and commerce alive throughout your vast empire."

"You know," she replied, with a sly smile, "that Peter the Great was not exactly a learned man."

"He was more than a man of learning, the immortal Peter was a genius of the first order. Instinct supplied the place of science with him; his judgment was always in the right. His vast genius, his firm resolve, prevented him from making mistakes, and helped him to destroy all those abuses which threatened to oppose his great designs."

Her majesty seemed to have heard me with great interest, and was about to reply when she noticed two ladies whom she summoned to her presence. To me she said:

"I shall be delighted to reply to you at another time"; and then turned towards the ladies.

The time came in eight or ten days, when I was beginning to think she had had enough of me, for she had seen me without summoning me to speak to her.

She began by saying that what I desired should be done was

already done. "All the letters sent to foreign countries and all the important state records are marked with both dates."

"But I must point out to your majesty that by the end of the century the difference will be of twelve days, not eleven."

"Not at all; we have seen to that. The last year of this century will not be accounted as a leap year. It is fortunate that the difference is one of eleven days, for as that is the number which is added every year to the epact our epacts are almost the same. As to the celebration of Easter, that is a different question. Your equinox is on March the 21st, ours on the 10th, and the astronomers say we are both wrong; sometimes it is we who are wrong and sometimes you, as the equinox varies. You know you are not even in agreement with the Jews, whose calculation is said to be perfectly accurate: and, in fine, this difference in the time of celebrating Easter does not disturb in any way public order or the progress of the government."

"Your majesty's words fill me with admiration, but the Festival of Christmas . . ."

"I suppose you are going to say that we do not celebrate Christmas in the winter solstice as should properly be done. We know it, but it seems to one a matter of no account. I would rather bear with this small mistake than grievously afflict vast numbers of my subjects by depriving them of their birthdays. If I did so, there would be no open complaints uttered, as that is not the fashion in Russia; but they would say in secret that I was an Atheist, and that I disputed the infallibility of the Council of Nice. You may think such complaints matter for laughter, but I do not, for I have much more agreeable motives for amusement."

The czarina was delighted to mark my surprise. I did not doubt for a moment that she had made a special study of the whole subject. M. Alsuwieff told me, a few days after, that she had very possibly read a little pamphlet on the subject, the statements of which exactly coincided with her own. He took care to add, however, that it was very possible her highness was profoundly learned on the matter, but this was merely a courtier's phrase.

What she said was spoken modestly and energetically, and her good humour and pleasant smile remained unmoved throughout. She exercised a constant self-control over herself, and

herein appeared the greatness of her character, for nothing is more difficult. Her demeanour, so different from that of the Prussian king, showed her to be the greater sovereign of the two; her frank geniality always gave her the advantage, while the short, curt manners of the king often exposed him to being made a dupe. In an examination of the life of Frederick the Great, one cannot help paying a deserved tribute to his courage, but at the same time one feels that if it had not been for repeated turns of good fortune he must have succumbed, whereas Catherine was little indebted to the favours of the blind deity. She succeeded in enterprises which, before her time, would have been pronounced impossibilities, and it seemed her aim to make men look upon her achievements as of small account.

CHAPTER XX

Story of the Famous Duel

AMONG the various accomplishments on which Casanova prided himself that of successful duellist is not the least — a very necessary accomplishment in those days for all who wished to make a career, whether in the half-world or the great world. Doubtless the chevalier possessed all the essential physical and moral qualities to make him a good combatant, but the ease with which he disposes of all his adversaries was doubtless due in a large measure to a certain estocade *which he had learnt in his youth (where and how he does not say) and which he declares never failed him. As his duels were generally fought without witnesses and, according to his own accounts, invariably terminated, after a few passes, with the triumphal thrust which put his opponent* hors de combat, *we are left to infer that the blow in question may not have been among those regarded as strictly regular by sticklers for the classic* duello — *but we know already Casanova's opinion of sticklers in general.*

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that Casanova refused to fight with any weapon but the sword. The pistols he carried — and on occasion knew how to use — were meant to defend his life, not that curious thing he called his "honour." But it so happened that in the most famous of all his encounters it was with the pistol and not the sword that he had to defend both life and honour. This

was the famous duel with Count Branicki, near Warsaw, whither he had gone on leaving Russia. The story of this duel ranks in Casanovian annals with The Escape from The Leads, *and, like the latter, was one of the especially prepared* morceaux *which Casanova was wont to recite when called upon to entertain the company. It has two notable advantages over the* Escape: *that of brevity and certified truth, Count Branicki himself having in later years assured the Prince de Ligne (uncle of Count Waldstein and a friend and admirer of the latter's librarian at Dux) that the latter's strange story could be believed. We give it in full:*

Madame Binetti, whom I had last seen in London, arrived at Warsaw with her husband and Pic the dancer. She had a letter of introduction to the king's brother, who was a general in the Austrian service, and then resided at Warsaw. I heard that the day they came, when I was at supper at the palatin's. The king was present, and said he should like to keep them in Warsaw for a week and see them dance, if a thousand ducats would satisfy them.

I went to see Madame Binetti and to give her the good news the next morning. She was very much surprised to meet me in Warsaw, and still more so at the news I gave her. She called Pic, who seemed undecided, but as we were talking it over, Prince Poniatowski came in to acquaint them with his majesty's wishes, and the offer was accepted. In three days Pic arranged a ballet; the costumes, the scenery, the music, the dancers — all were ready, and Tomatis put it on handsomely to please his generous master. The couple gave such satisfaction that they were engaged for a year. The Catai was furious, as Madame Binetti threw her completely into the shade, and, worse still, drew away her lovers. Tomatis, who was under the Catai's influence, made things so unpleasant for Madame Binetti that the two dancers became deadly enemies.

In ten or twelve days Madame Binetti was settled in a well-furnished house; her plate was simple but good, her cellar full of excellent wine, her cook an artist, and her adorers numerous, amongst them being Moszciuski and Branicki, the king's friends.

The pit was divided into two parties, for the Catai was resolved to make a stand against the new-comer, though her talents were not to be compared to Madame Binetti's. She danced in the first ballet, and her rival in the second. Those who ap-

plauded the first greeted the second in dead silence, and *vice versa*. I had great obligations towards Madame Binetti, but my duty also drew me towards the Catai, who numbered in her party all the Czartoryskis and their following, Prince Lubomirski, and other powerful nobles. It was plain that I could not desert to Madame Binetti without earning the contempt of the other party.

Madame Binetti reproached me bitterly, and I laid the case plainly before her. She agreed that I could not do otherwise, but begged me to stay away from the theatre in future, telling me that she had got a rod in pickle for Tomatis which would make him repent of his impertinence. She called me her oldest friend; and indeed I was very fond of her, and cared nothing for the Catai despite her prettiness.

Xavier Branicki, the royal postoli, Knight of the White Eagle, colonel of Uhlans, the king's friend, was the chief adorer of Madame Binetti. The lady probably confided her displeasure to him, and begged him to take vengeance on the manager, who had committed so many offences against her. Count Branicki in his turn probably promised to avenge her quarrel, and, if no opportunity of doing so arose, to create an opportunity. At least, this is the way in which affairs of this kind are usually managed, and I can find no better explanation for what happened. Nevertheless, the way in which the Pole took vengeance was very original and extraordinary.

On the 20th of February Branicki went to the opera, and, contrary to his custom, went to the Catai's dressing-room, and began to pay his court to the actress, Tomatis being present. Both he and the actress concluded that Branicki had had a quarrel with her rival, and though she did not much care to place him in the number of her adorers, she yet gave him a good reception, for she knew it would be dangerous to despise his suit openly.

When the Catai had completed her toilet, the gallant postoli offered her his arm to take her to her carriage, which was at the door. Tomatis followed, and I too was there, awaiting my carriage. Madame Catai came down, the carriage-door was opened, she stepped in, and Branicki got in after her, telling the astonished Tomatis to follow them in the other carriage. Tomatis replied that he meant to ride in his own carriage, and begged

the colonel to get out. Branicki paid no attention, and told the coachman to drive on. Tomatis forbade him to stir, and the man, of course, obeyed the master. The gallant postoli was therefore obliged to get down, but he bade his hussar give Tomatis a box on the ear, and this order was so promptly and vigorously obeyed that the unfortunate man was on the ground before he had time to recollect that he had a sword. He got up eventually and drove off, but he would eat no supper, no doubt because he had a blow to digest. I was to have supped with him, but after this scene I had really not the face to go. I went home in a melancholy and reflective mood, wondering whether the whole had been concerted; but I concluded that this was impossible, as neither Branicki nor Binetti could have foreseen the impoliteness and cowardice of Tomatis.

The reader will see how tragically the matter ended.

On reflection I concluded that Branicki had not done an ungentlemanly thing in getting into Tomatis's carriage; he had merely behaved with impetuosity, as if he were the Catai's lover. It also appeared to me that, considering the affront he had received from the jealous Italian, the box on the ear was a very moderate form of vengeance. A blow is bad, of course, but not so bad as death; and Branicki might very well have run his sword through the manager's body. Certainly, if Branicki had killed him he would have been stigmatised as an assassin, for though Tomatis had a sword the Polish officer's servants would never have allowed him to draw it, nevertheless I could not help thinking that Tomatis should have tried to take the servant's life, even at the risk of his own. He wanted no more courage for that than in ordering the king's favourite to come out of the carriage. He might have foreseen that the Polish noble would be stung to the quick, and would surely attempt to take speedy vengeance.

The next day the encounter was the subject of all conversations. Tomatis remained indoors for a week, calling for vengeance in vain. The king told him he could do nothing for him, as Branicki maintained he had only given insult for insult. I saw Tomatis, who told me in confidence that he could easily take vengeance, but that it would cost him too dear. He had spent forty thousand ducats on the two ballets, and if he had avenged himself he would have lost it nearly all, as he would be

obliged to leave the kingdom. The only consolation he had was that his great friends were kinder to him than ever, and the king himself honoured him with peculiar attention. Madame Binetti was triumphant. When I saw her she condoled with me ironically on the mishap that had befallen my friend. She wearied me; but I could not guess that Branicki had only acted at her instigation, and still less that she had a grudge against me. Indeed, if I had known it, I should only have laughed at her, for I had nothing to dread from her bravo's dagger. I had never seen him nor spoken to him; he could have no opportunity for attacking me. He was never with the king in the morning and never went to the palatin's to supper, being an unpopular character with the Polish nobility. This Branicki was said to have been originally a Cossack, Branecki by name. He became the king's favourite and assumed the name of Branicki, pretending to be of the same family as the illustrious marshal of that name, who was still alive; but he, far from recognising the pretender, ordered his shield to be broken and buried with him as the last of his race. However that may be, Branicki was the tool of the Russian party, the determined enemy of those who withstood Catherine's design of Russianising the ancient Polish constitution. The king liked him out of habit, and because he had peculiar obligations to him.

The life I lived was really exemplary. I indulged neither in love affairs nor gaming. I worked for the king, hoping to become his secretary. I paid my court to the princess-palatine, who liked my company, and I played tressette with the palatin himself.

On the 4th of March, St. Casimir's Eve, there was a banquet to which I had the honour to be invited. Casimir was the name of the king's eldest brother, who held the office of grand chamberlain. After dinner the king asked me if I intended going to the theatre where a Polish play was to be given for the first time. Everybody was interested in this novelty, but it was a matter of indifference to me as I did not understand the language, and I told the king as much.

"Never mind," said he, "come in my box."

This was too flattering an invitation to be refused, so I obeyed the royal command and stood behind the king's chair. After the second act a ballet was given, and the dancing of Madame

Caracci, a Piedmontese, so pleased his majesty that he went to the unusual pains of clapping her.

I only knew the dancer by sight, for I had never spoken to her. She had some talents. Her principal admirer was Count Poninski, who was always reproaching me when I dined with him for visiting the other dancers to the exclusion of Madame Caracci. I thought of his reproach at the time, and determined to pay her a visit after the ballet to congratulate her on her performance and the king's applause. On my way I passed by Madame Binetti's dressing-room, and seeing the door open I stayed a moment. Count Branicki came up, and I left with a bow and passed on to Madame Caracci's dressing-room. She was astonished to see me, and began with kindly reproaches for my neglect; to which I replied with compliments, and then giving her a kiss I promised to come and see her.

Just as I embraced her, who should enter but Branicki, whom I had left a moment before with Madame Binetti. He had clearly followed me in the hopes of picking a quarrel. He was accompanied by Bininski, his lieutenant-colonel. As soon as he appeared, politeness made me stand up and turn to go, but he stopped me.

"It seems to me I have come at a bad time; it looks as if you loved this lady."

"Certainly, my lord; does not your excellency consider her as worthy of love?"

"Quite so; but as it happens I love her too, and I am not the man to bear any rivals."

"As I know that, I shall love her no more."

"Then you give her up?"

"With all my heart; for everyone must yield to such a noble as you are."

"Very good; but I call a man that yields a coward."

"Isn't that rather a strong expression?"

As I uttered these words I looked proudly at him and touched the hilt of my sword. Three or four officers were present and witnessed what passed.

I had hardly gone four paces from the dressing-room when I heard myself called "Venetian coward." In spite of my rage I restrained myself, and turned back saying, coolly and firmly, that perhaps a Venetian coward might kill a brave Pole outside

the theatre; and without awaiting a reply I left the building by the chief staircase.

I waited vainly outside the theatre for a quarter of an hour with my sword in my hand, for I was not afraid of losing forty thousand ducats like Tomatis. At last, half perishing with cold, I called my carriage and drove to the palatin's, where the king was to sup.

The cold and loneliness began to cool my brain, and I congratulated myself on my self-restraint in not drawing my sword in the actress's dressing-room; and I felt glad that Branicki had not followed me down the stairs, for his friend Bininski had a sabre, and I should probably have been assassinated.

Although the Poles are polite enough, there is still a good deal of the old leaven in them. They are still Dacians and Sarmatians at dinner, in war, and in friendship, as they call it, but which is often a burden hardly to be borne. They can never understand that a man may be sufficient company for himself, and that it is not right to descend on him in a troop and ask him to give them dinner.

I made up my mind that Madame Binetti had excited Branicki to follow me, and possibly to treat me as he had treated Tomatis. I had not received a blow certainly, but I had been called a coward. I had no choice but to demand satisfaction, but I also determined to be studiously moderate throughout. In this frame of mind I got down at the palatin's, resolved to tell the whole story to the king, leaving his majesty the task of compelling his favourite to give me satisfaction.

As soon as the palatin saw me, he reproached me in a friendly manner for keeping him waiting, and we sat down to tressette. I was his partner, and committed several blunders. When it came to losing a second game he said:

"Where is your head to-night?"

"My lord, it is four leagues away."

"A respectable man ought to have his head in the game, and not at a distance of four leagues."

With these words the prince threw down his cards and began to walk up and down the room. I was rather startled, but I got up and stood by the fire, waiting for the king. But after I had waited thus for half an hour a chamberlain came from the palace, and announced that his majesty could not do himself the honour of supping with my lord that night.

This was a blow for me, but I concealed my disappointment. Supper was served, and I sat down as usual at the left hand of the palatin, who was annoyed with me, and showed it. We were eighteen at table, and for once I had no appetite. About the middle of the supper Prince Gaspard Lubomirski came in, and chanced to sit down opposite me. As soon as he saw me he condoled with me in a loud voice for what had happened.

"I am sorry for you," said he, "but Branicki was drunk, and you really shouldn't count what he said as an insult."

"What has happened?" became at once the general question. I held my tongue, and when they asked Lubomirski he replied that as I kept silence it was his duty to do the same.

Thereupon the palatin, speaking in his friendliest manner, said to me:

"What has taken place between you and Branicki?"

"I will tell you the whole story, my lord, in private after supper."

The conversation became indifferent, and after the meal was over, the palatin took up his stand by the small door by which he was accustomed to leave the room, and there I told him the whole story. He sighed, condoled with me, and added:

"You had good reason for being absent-minded at cards."

"May I presume to ask your excellency's advice?"

"I never give advice in these affairs, in which you must do everything or nothing."

The palatin shook me by the hand, and I went home and slept for six hours. As soon as I awoke I sat up in bed, and my first thought was *everything or nothing.* I soon rejected the latter alternative, and I saw that I must demand a duel to the death. If Branicki refused to fight I should be compelled to kill him, even if I were to lose my head for it.

Such was my determination; to write to him proposing a duel at four leagues from Warsaw, this being the limit of the starostia, in which duelling was forbidden on pain of death. I wrote as follows, for I have kept the rough draft of the letter to this day:

"Warsaw,

"March 5th, 1766. 5 A.M.

"My Lord, — Yesterday evening your excellency insulted me with a light heart, without my having given you any cause or reason for doing so. This seems to indicate that you hate me,

and would gladly efface me from the land of the living. I both can and will oblige you in this matter. Be kind enough, therefore, to drive me in your carriage to a place where my death will not subject your lordship to the vengeance of the law, in case you obtain the victory, and where I shall enjoy the same advantage if God give me grace to kill your lordship. I should not make this proposal unless I believed your lordship to be of a noble disposition.

"I have the honour to be, etc."

I sent this letter an hour before daybreak to Branicki's lodging in the palace. My messenger had orders to give the letter into the count's own hands, to wait for him to rise, and also for an answer.

In half an hour I received the following answer:

"Sir, — I accept your proposal, and shall be glad if you will have the kindness to inform me when I shall have the honour of seeing you.

"I remain, sir, etc."

I answered this immediately, informing him I would call on him the next day, at six o'clock in the morning.

Shortly after, I received a second letter, in which he said that I might choose the arms and place, but that our differences must be settled in the course of the day.

I sent him the measure of my sword, which was thirty-two inches long, telling him he might choose any place beyond the ban. In reply, I had the following:

"Sir, — You will greatly oblige me by coming now. I have sent my carriage.

"I have the honour to be, etc."

I replied that I had business all the day, and that as I had made up my mind not to call upon him, except for the purpose of fighting, I begged him not to be offended if I took the liberty of sending back his carriage.

An hour later Branicki called in person, leaving his suite at the door. He came into the room, requested some gentlemen who were talking with me to leave us alone, locked the door after them, and then sat down on my bed. I did not understand what all this meant, so I took up my pistols.

"Don't be afraid," said he, "I am not come to assassinate you, but merely to say that I accept your proposal, on condition only that the duel shall take place to-day. If not, never."

"It is out of the question. I have letters to write, and some business to do for the king."

"That will do afterwards. In all probability you will not fall, and if you do I am sure the king will forgive you. Besides, a dead man need fear no reproaches."

"I want to make my will."

"Come, come, you needn't be afraid of dying; it will be time enough for you to make your will in fifty years."

"But why should your excellency not wait till to-morrow?"

"I don't want to be caught."

"You will have nothing of the kind to fear from me."

"I dare say, but unless we make haste the king will have us both arrested."

"How can he, unless you have told him about our quarrel?"

"Ah, you don't understand! Well, I am quite willing to give you satisfaction, but it must be to-day or never."

"Very good. This duel is too dear to my heart for me to leave you any pretext for avoiding it. Call for me after dinner, for I shall want all my strength."

"Certainly. For my part I like a good supper after, better than a good dinner before."

"Everyone to his taste."

"True. By the way, why did you send me the length of your sword. I intend to fight with pistols, for I never use swords with unknown persons."

"What do you mean? I beg of you to refrain from insulting me in my own house. I do not intend to fight with pistols, and you cannot compel me to do so, for I have your letter giving me the choice of weapons."

"Strictly speaking, no doubt you are in the right; but I am sure you are too polite not to give way, when I assure you that you will lay me under a great obligation by doing so. Very often the first shot is a miss, and if that is the case with both of us, I promise to fight with swords as long as you like. Will you oblige me in the matter?"

"Yes, for I like your way of asking, though, in my opinion, a pistol duel is a barbarous affair. I accept, but on the following conditions: You must bring two pistols, charge them in my presence, and give me the choice. If the first shot is a miss, we will fight with swords till the first blood or to the death, whichever

you prefer. Call for me at three o'clock, and choose some place where we shall be secure from the law."

"Very good. You are a good fellow, allow me to embrace you. Give me your word of honour not to say a word about it to anyone, for if you did we should be arrested immediately."

"You need not be afraid of my talking; the project is too dear to me."

"Good. Farewell till three o'clock."

As soon as the brave braggart had left me, I placed the papers I was doing for the king apart, and went to Campioni, in whom I had great confidence.

"Take this packet to the king," I said, "if I happen to be killed. You may guess, perhaps, what is going to happen, but do not say a word to anyone, as it would mean loss of honour to me."

"I understand. You may reckon on my discretion, and I hope the affair may be ended honourably and prosperously for you. But take a piece of friendly advice — don't spare your opponent, were it the king himself, for it might cost you your life. I know that by experience."

"I will not forget. Farewell."

We kissed each other, and I ordered an excellent dinner, for I had no mind to be sent to Pluto fasting. Campioni came in to dinner at one o'clock, and at dessert I had a visit from two young counts, with their tutor, Bertrand, a kindly Swiss. They were witnesses to my cheerfulness and the excellent appetite with which I ate. At half-past two I dismissed my company, and stood at the window to be ready to go down directly Branicki's carriage appeared. He drove up in a travelling carriage and six; two grooms, leading saddle horses, went in front, followed by his two aide-de-camps and two hussars. Behind his carriage stood four servants. I hastened to descend, and found my enemy was accompanied by a lieutenant-general and an armed footman. The door was opened, the general gave me his place, and I ordered my servants not to follow me but await my orders at the house.

"You might want them," said Branicki; "they had better come along."

"If I had as many as you, I would certainly agree to your proposition; but as it is I shall do still better without any at all.

If need be, your excellency will see that I am tended by your own servants."

He gave me his hand, and assured me they should wait on me before himself.

I sat down, and we went off.

It would have been absurd if I had asked where we were going, so I held my tongue, for at such moments a man should take heed to his words. Branicki was silent, and I thought the best thing I could do would be to engage him in a trivial conversation.

"Does your excellency intend spending the spring at Warsaw?"

"I had thought of doing so, but you may possibly send me to pass the spring somewhere else."

"Oh, I hope not!"

"Have you seen any military service?"

"Yes; but may I ask why your excellency asks me the question, for . . ."

"I had no particular reason; it was only for the sake of saying something."

We had driven about half an hour when the carriage stopped at the door of a large garden. We got down and, following the postoli, reached a green arbour which, by the way, was not at all green on that 5th of March. In it was a stone table on which the footman placed two pistols, a foot and a half long, with a powder flask and scales. He weighed the powder, loaded them equally, and laid them down crosswise on the table.

This done, Branicki said boldly:

"Choose your weapon, sir."

At this the general called out:

"Is this a duel, sir?"

"Yes."

"You cannot fight here; you are within the ban."

"No matter."

"It does matter; and I, at all events, refuse to be a witness. I am on guard at the castle, and you have taken me by surprise."

"Be quiet; I will answer for everything. I owe this gentleman satisfaction, and I mean to give it him here."

"M. Casanova," said the general, "you cannot fight here."

"Then why have I been brought here? I shall defend myself wherever I am attacked."

"Lay the whole matter before the king, and you shall have my voice in your favour."

"I am quite willing to do so, general, if his excellency will say that he regrets what passed between us last night."

Branicki looked fiercely at me, and said wrathfully that he had come to fight and not to parley.

"General," said I, "you can bear witness that I have done all in my power to avoid this duel."

The general went away with his head between his hands, and throwing off my cloak I took the first pistol that came to my hand. Branicki took the other, and said that he would guarantee upon his honour that my weapon was a good one.

"I am going to try its goodness on your head," I answered.

He turned pale at this, threw his sword to one of his servants, and bared his throat, and I was obliged, to my sorrow, to follow his example, for my sword was the only weapon I had, with the exception of the pistol. I bared my chest also, and stepped back five or six paces, and he did the same.

As soon as we had taken up our positions I took off my hat with my left hand, and begged him to fire first.

Instead of doing so immediately he lost two or three seconds in sighting, aiming, and covering his head by raising the weapon before it. I was not in a position to let him kill me at his ease, so I suddenly aimed and fired on him just as he fired on me. That I did so is evident, as all the witnesses were unanimous in saying that they heard only one report. I felt I was wounded in my left hand, and so I put it into my pocket, and I ran towards my enemy who had fallen. All of a sudden, as I knelt beside him, three bare swords were flourished over my head, and three noble assassins prepared to cut me down beside their master. Fortunately, Branicki had not lost consciousness or the power of speaking, and he cried out in a voice of thunder:

"Scoundrels! have some respect for a man of honour."

This seemed to petrify them. I put my right hand under the postoli's armpit, while the general helped him on the other side, and thus we took him to the inn, which happened to be near at hand.

Branicki stooped as he walked, and gazed at me curiously,

apparently wondering where all the blood on my clothes came from.

When we got to the inn, Branicki laid himself down in an arm-chair. We unbuttoned his clothes and lifted up his shirt, and he could see himself that he was dangerously wounded. My ball had entered his body by the seventh rib on the right hand, and had gone out by the second false rib on the left. The two wounds were ten inches apart, and the case was of an alarming nature, as the intestine must have been pierced. Branicki spoke to me in a weak voice: —

"You have killed me, so make haste away, as you are in danger of the gibbet. The duel was fought in the ban, and I am a high court officer, and a Knight of the White Eagle. So lose no time, and if you have not enough money take my purse."

I picked up the purse which had fallen out, and put it back in his pocket, thanking him, and saying it would be useless to me, for if I were guilty I was content to lose my head. "I hope," I added, "that your wound will not be mortal, and I am deeply grieved at your obliging me to fight."

With these words I kissed him on his brow and left the inn, seeing neither horses nor carriage, nor servant. They had all gone off for a doctor, surgeon, priest, and the friends and relatives of the wounded man.

I was alone and without any weapon, in the midst of a snow-covered country, my hand was wounded, and I had not the slightest idea which was the way to Warsaw.

I took the road which seemed most likely, and after I had gone some distance I met a peasant with an empty sleigh.

"*Warszawa?*" I cried, showing him a ducat.

He understood me, and lifted a coarse mat, with which he covered me when I got into the sleigh, and then set off at a gallop.

All at once Bininski, Branicki's bosom-friend, came galloping furiously along the road with his bare sword in his hand. He was evidently running after me. Happily he did not glance at the wretched sleigh in which I was, or else he would undoubtedly have murdered me. I got at last to Warsaw, and went to the house of Prince Adam Czartoryski to beg him to shelter me, but there was nobody there. Without delay I determined to seek refuge in the convent of the Recollets, which was handy.

I rang at the door of the monastery, and the porter seeing me covered with blood hastened to shut the door, guessing the object of my visit. But I did not give him the time to do so, but honouring him with a hearty kick forced my way in. His cries attracted a troop of frightened monks. I demanded sanctuary, and threatened them with vengeance if they refused to grant it. One of their number spoke to me, and I was taken to a little den which looked more like a dungeon than anything else. I offered no resistance, feeling sure that they would change their tune before very long. I asked them to send for my servants, and when they came I sent for a doctor and Campioni. Before the surgeon could come the Palatin of Polduchia was announced. I never had the honour of speaking to him, but after hearing the history of my duel he was so kind as to give me all the particulars of a duel he had fought in his youthful days. Soon after came the Palatin of Kalisch, Prince Jablenowski, Prince Sanguska, and the Palatin of Wilna, who all joined in a chorus of abuse of the monks who had lodged me so scurvily. The poor religious excused themselves by saying that I had ill-treated their porter, which made my noble friends laugh; but I did not laugh, for my wound was very painful. However, I was immediately moved into two of their best guest-rooms.

The ball had pierced my hand by the metacarpus under the index finger, and had broken the first phalanges. Its force had been arrested by a metal button on my waistcoat, and it had only inflicted a slight wound on my stomach close to the navel. However, there it was and it had to be extracted, for it pained me extremely. An empiric named Gendron, the first surgeon my servants had found, made an opening on the opposite side of my hand which doubled the wound. While he was performing this painful operation I told the story of the duel to the company, concealing the anguish I was enduring. What a power vanity exercises on the moral and physical forces! If I had been alone I should probably have fainted.

As soon as the empiric Gendron was gone, the palatin's surgeon came in and took charge of the case, calling Gendron a low fellow. At the same time Prince Lubomirski, the husband of the palatin's daughter, arrived, and gave us all a surprise by recounting the strange occurrences which had happened after the duel. Bininski came to where Branicki was lying, and seeing his

wound rode off furiously on horseback, swearing to strike me dead wherever he found me. He fancied I would be with Tomatis, and went to his house. He found Tomatis with his mistress, Prince Lubomirski, and Count Moszczinski but no Casanova was visible. He asked where I was, and on Tomatis replying that he did not know he discharged a pistol at his head. At this dastardly action Count Moszczinski seized him and tried to throw him out of the window, but the madman got loose with three cuts of his sabre, one of which slashed the count on the face and knocked out three of his teeth.

"After this exploit," Prince Lubomirski continued, "he seized me by the throat and held a pistol to my head, threatening to blow out my brains if I did not take him in safety to the court where his horse was, so that he might get away from the house without any attack being made on him by Tomatis's servants; and I did so immediately. Moszczinski is in the doctor's hands, and will be laid up for some time.

"As soon as it was reported that Branicki was killed, his Uhlans began to ride about the town swearing to avenge their colonel, and to slaughter you. It is very fortunate that you took refuge here.

"The chief marshal has had the monastery surrounded by two hundred dragoons, ostensibly to prevent your escape, but in reality to defend you from Branicki's soldiers.

"The doctors say that the postoli is in great danger if the ball has wounded the intestines, but if not they answer for his recovery. His fate will be known to-morrow. He now lies at the lord chamberlain's, not daring to have himself carried to his apartments at the palace. The king has been to see him, and the general who was present told his majesty that the only thing that saved your life was your threat to aim at Branicki's head. This frightened him, and to keep your ball from his head he stood in such an awkward position that he missed your vital parts. Otherwise he would undoubtedly have shot you through the heart, for he can split a bullet into two halves by firing against the blade of a knife. It was also a lucky thing for you that you escaped Bininski, who never thought of looking for you in the wretched sleigh."

"My lord, the most fortunate thing for me is that I did not kill my man outright. Otherwise I should have been cut to

pieces just as I went to his help by three of his servants, who stood over me with drawn swords. However, the postoli ordered them to leave me alone.

"I am sorry for what has happened to your highness and Count Moszczinski; and if Tomatis was not killed by the madman it is only because the pistol was only charged with powder."

"That's what I think, for no one heard the bullet; but it was a mere chance."

"Quite so."

Just then an officer of the palatin's came to me with a note from his master, which ran as follows:

"Read what the king says to me, and sleep well."

The king's note was thus conceived:

"Branicki, my dear uncle, is dangerously wounded. My surgeons are doing all they can for him, but I have not forgotten Casanova. You may assure him that he is pardoned, even if Branicki should die."

I kissed the letter gratefully, and showed it to my visitors, who lauded this generous man, truly worthy of being a king.

After this pleasant news I felt in need of rest, and my lords left me. As soon as they were gone, Campioni, who had come in before and had stood in the background, came up to me and gave me back the packet of papers, and with tears of joy congratulated me on the happy issue of the duel.

Next day I had shoals of visitors, and many of the chiefs of the party opposed to Branicki sent me purses full of gold. The persons who brought the money on behalf of such a lord or lady, said that being a foreigner I might be in need of money, and that was their excuse for the liberty they had taken. I thanked and refused them all, and sent back at least four thousand ducats, and was very proud of having done so. Campioni thought it was absurd, and he was right, for I repented afterwards of what I had done. The only present I accepted was a dinner for four persons, which Prince Adam Czartoryski sent me in every day, though the doctor would not let me enjoy it, he being a great believer in diet.

The wound in my stomach was progressing favourably, but on the fourth day the surgeons said my hand was becoming gangrened, and they agreed that the only remedy was amputation. I saw this announced in the *Court Gazette* the next morning,

but as I had other views on the matter I laughed heartily at the paragraph. The sheet was printed at night, after the king had placed his initials to the copy. In the morning several persons came to condole with me, but I received their sympathy with great irreverence. I merely laughed at Count Clary, who said I would surely submit to the operation; and just as he uttered the words the three surgeons came in together.

"Well, gentlemen," said I, "you have mustered in great strength; why is this?"

My ordinary surgeon replied that he wished to have the opinion of the other two before proceeding to amputation, and they would require to look at the wound.

The dressing was lifted and gangrene was declared to be undoubtedly present, and execution was ordered that evening. The butchers gave me the news with radiant faces, and assured me I need not be afraid as the operation would certainly prove efficacious.

"Gentlemen," I replied, "you seem to have a great many solid scientific reasons for cutting off my hand; but one thing you have not got, and that is my consent. My hand is my own, and I am going to keep it."

"Sir, it is certainly gangrened; by to-morrow the arm will begin to mortify, and then you will have to lose your arm."

"Very good; if that prove so you shall cut off my arm, but I happen to know something of gangrene, and there is none about me."

"You cannot know as much about it as we do."

"Possibly; but as far as I can make out, you know nothing at all."

"That's rather a strong expression."

"I don't care whether it be strong or weak; you can go now."

In a couple of hours everyone whom the surgeons had told of my obstinacy came pestering me. Even the prince-palatin wrote to me that the king was extremely surprised at my lack of courage. This stung me to the quick, and I wrote the king a long letter, half in earnest, half in jest, in which I laughed at the ignorance of the surgeons, and at the simplicity of those who took whatever they said for gospel truth. I added that as an arm without a hand would be quite as useless as no arm at all, I meant to wait till it was necessary to cut off the arm.

My letter was read at Court, and people wondered how a man with gangrene could write a long letter of four pages. Lubomirski told me kindly that I was mistaken in laughing at my friends, for the three best surgeons in Warsaw could not be mistaken in such a simple case.

"My lord, they are not deceived themselves, but they want to deceive me."

"Why should they?"

"To make themselves agreeable to Branicki, who is in a dangerous state, and might possibly get better if he heard that my hand had been taken off."

"Really, that seems an incredible idea to me!"

"What will your highness say on the day when I am proved to be right?"

"I shall say you are deserving of the highest praise, but the day must first come."

"We shall see this evening, and I give you my word that if any gangrene has attacked the arm, I will have it cut off to-morrow morning."

Four surgeons came to see me. My arm was pronounced to be highly œdematous, and of a livid colour up to the elbow; but when the lint was taken off the wound I could see for myself that it was progressing admirably. However, I concealed my delight. Prince Augustus Sulkowski and the Abbé Gouvel were present; the latter being attached to the palatin's court. The judgment of the surgeons was that the arm was gangrened, and must be amputated by the next morning at latest.

I was tired of arguing with these rascals, so I told them to bring their instruments, and that I would submit to the operation. At this they went away in high glee, to tell the news at the Court, to Branicki, to the palatin, and so forth. I merely gave my servants orders to send them away when they came.

I can dwell no more on this matter, though it is interesting enough to me. However, the reader will no doubt be obliged to me by my simply saying that a French surgeon in Prince Sulkowski's household took charge of the case in defiance of professional etiquette, and cured me perfectly, so I have my hand and my arm to this day.

On Easter Day I went to mass with my arm in a sling. My cure had only lasted three weeks, but I was not able to put the

hand to any active employment for eighteen months afterwards. Everyone was obliged to congratulate me on having held out against the amputation, and the general consent declared the surgeons grossly ignorant, while I was satisfied with thinking them very great knaves.

I must here set down an incident which happened three days after the duel.

I was told that a Jesuit father from the bishop of the diocese wanted to speak to me in private, and I had him shown in, and asked him what he wanted.

"I have come from my lord bishop," said he, "to absolve you from the ecclesiastical censure which you have incurred by duelling."

"I am always delighted to receive absolution, father, but only after I have confessed my guilt. In the present case I have nothing to confess; I was attacked, and I defended myself. Pray thank my lord for his kindness. If you like to absolve me without confession, I shall be much obliged."

"If you do not confess, I cannot give you absolution, but you can do this: ask me to absolve you, supposing you have fought a duel."

"Certainly; I shall be glad if you will absolve me, supposing I have fought a duel."

The delightful Jesuit gave me absolution in similar terms. He was like his brethren — never at a loss when a loophole of any kind is required.

Three days before I left the monastery, that is on Holy Thursday, the marshal withdrew my guard. After I had been to mass on Easter Day, I went to Court, and as I kissed the king's hand, he asked me (as had been arranged) why I wore my arm in a sling. I said I had been suffering from a chill, and he replied, with a meaning smile:

"Take care not to catch another."

After my visit to the king, I called on Branicki, who had made daily inquiries after my health, and had sent me back my sword. He was condemned to stay in bed for six weeks longer, at least, for the wad of my pistol had got into the wound, and in extracting it the opening had to be enlarged, which retarded his recovery. The king had just appointed him chief huntsman, not so exalted an office as chamberlain, but a more lucrative one. It

was said he had got the place because he was such a good shot; but if that were the reason I had a better claim to it, for I had proved the better shot — for one day at all events.

I entered an enormous ante-room in which stood officers, footmen, pages, and lackeys, all gazing at me with the greatest astonishment. I asked if my lord was to be seen, and begged the door-keeper to send in my name. He did not answer, but sighed, and went into his master's room. Directly after, he came out and begged me, with a profound bow, to step in.

Branicki, who was dressed in a magnificent gown and supported by pillows and cushions, greeted me by taking off his night-cap. He was as pale as death.

"I have come here, my lord," I began, "to offer you my service and to assure you how I regret that I did not pass over a few trifling words of yours."

"You have no reason to reproach yourself, M. Casanova."

"Your excellency is very kind. I am also come to say that by fighting with me you have done me an honour which completely swallows up all offence, and I trust that you will give me your protection for the future."

"I confess I insulted you, but you will allow that I have paid for it. As to my friends, I openly say that they are my enemies unless they treat you with respect. Bininski has been cashiered, and his nobility taken from him; he is well served. As to my protection you have no need of it, the king esteems you highly, like myself, and all men of honour. Sit down; we will be friends. A cup of chocolate for this gentleman. You seem to have got over your wound completely."

"Quite so, my lord, except as to the use of my fingers, and that will take some time."

"You were quite right to withstand those rascally surgeons, and you had good reason for your opinion that the fools thought to please me by rendering you one-handed. They judged my heart by their own. I congratulate you on the preservation of your hand, but I have not been able to make out how my ball could have wounded you in the hand after striking your stomach."

Just then the chocolate was brought, and the chamberlain came in and looked at me with a smile. In five minutes the room was full of lords and ladies who had heard I was with

Branicki, and wanted to know how we were getting on. I could see that they did not expect to find us on such good terms, and were agreeably surprised. Branicki asked the question which had been interrupted by the chocolate and the visitors over again.

"Your excellency will allow me to assume the position I was in as I received your fire."

"Pray do so."

I rose and placed myself in the position, and he said he understood how it was.

A lady said:

"You should have put your hand behind your body."

"Excuse me, madam, but I thought it better to put my body behind my hand."

This sally made Branicki laugh, but his sister said to me:

"You wanted to kill my brother, for you aimed at his head."

"God forbid, madam! my interest lay in keeping him alive to defend me from his friends."

"But you said you were going to fire at his head."

"That's a mere figure of speech, just as one says, 'I'll blow your brains out.' The skilled duellist, however, always aims at the middle of the body; the head does not offer a large enough surface."

"Yes," said Branicki, "your tactics were superior to mine, and I am obliged to you for the lesson you gave me."

"Your excellency gave me a lesson in heroism of far greater value."

"You must have had a great deal of practice with the pistol," continued his sister.

"Not at all, madam, I regard the weapon with detestation. This unlucky shot was my first; but I have always known a straight line, and my hand has always been steady."

"That's all one wants," said Branicki. "I have those advantages myself, and I am only too well pleased that I did not aim so well as usual."

"Your ball broke my first phalanges. Here it is, you see, flattened by my bone. Allow me to return it to you."

"I am sorry to say I can't return yours, which I suppose remains on the field of battle."

"You seem to be getting better, thank God!"

"The wound is healing painfully. If I had imitated you I

should no longer be in the land of the living; I am told you made an excellent dinner?"

"Yes, my lord, I was afraid I might never have another chance of dining again."

"If I had dined, your ball would have pierced the intestine; but being empty it yielded to the bullet, and let it pass by harmlessly."

I heard afterwards that on the day of the duel Branicki had gone to confession and mass, and had communicated. The priest could not refuse him absolution, if he said that honour obliged him to fight; for this was in accordance with the ancient laws of chivalry. As for me I only addressed these words to God:

"Lord, if my enemy kill me, I shall be damned; deign, therefore, to preserve me from death. Amen."

After a long and pleasant conversation I took leave of the hero to visit the high constable, Count Bielinski, brother of Countess Salmor. He was a very old man, but the sovereign administrator of justice in Poland. I had never spoken to him, but he had defended me from Branicki's Uhlans, and had made out my pardon, so I felt bound to go and thank him.

I sent in my name, and the worthy old man greeted me with:

"What can I do for you?"

"I have come to kiss the hand of the kindly man that signed my pardon, and to promise your excellency to be more discreet in future."

"I advise you to be more discreet indeed. As for your pardon, thank the king; for if he had not requested me especially to grant it you, I should have had you beheaded."

"In spite of the extenuating circumstances, my lord?"

"What circumstances? Did you or did you not fight a duel?"

"That is not a proper way of putting it; I was obliged to defend myself. You might have charged me with fighting a duel if Branicki had taken me outside the ban, as I requested, but as it was he took me where he willed and made me fight. Under these circumstances I am sure your excellency would have spared my head."

"I really can't say. The king requested that you should be pardoned, and that shows he believes you to be deserving of pardon; I congratulate you on his good will. I shall be pleased if you will dine with me to-morrow."

"My lord, I am delighted to accept your invitation."

The illustrious old constable was a man of great intelligence. He had been a bosom-friend of the celebrated Poniatowski, the king's father. We had a good deal of conversation together at dinner the next day.

"What a comfort it would have been to your excellency's friend," said I, "if he could have lived to see his son crowned King of Poland."

"He would never have consented."

The vehemence with which he pronounced these words gave me a deep insight into his feelings. He was of the Saxon party. The same day, that is on Easter Day, I dined at the palatin's.

"Political reasons," said he, "prevented me from visiting you at the monastery; but you must not think I had forgotten you, for you were constantly in my thoughts. I am going to lodge you here, for my wife is very fond of your society; but the rooms will not be ready for another six weeks."

"I shall take the opportunity, my lord, of paying a visit to the Palatin of Kiowia, who has honoured me with an invitation to come and see him."

"Who gave you the invitation?"

"Count Brühl, who is at Dresden; his wife is daughter of the palatin."

"This journey is an excellent idea, for this duel of yours has made you innumerable enemies, and I only hope you will have to fight no more duels. I give you fair warning; be on your guard, and never go on foot, especially at night."

I spent a fortnight in going out to dinner and supper every day. I had become the fashion, and wherever I went I had to tell the duel story over again. I was rather tired of it myself, but the wish to please and my own self-love were too strong to be resisted. The king was nearly always present, but feigned not to hear me. However, he once asked me if I had been insulted by a patrician in Venice, whether I should have called him out immediately.

"No, sire, for his patrician pride would have prevented his complying, and I should have had my pains for my trouble."

"Then what would you have done?"

"Sire, I should have contained myself, though if a noble Venetian were to insult me in a foreign country he would have to give me satisfaction."

I called on Prince Moszczinski, and Madame Binetti happened to be there; the moment she saw me she made her escape.

"What has she against me?" I asked the count.

"She is afraid of you, because she was the cause of the duel, and now Branicki, who was her lover, will have nothing more to say to her. She hoped he would serve you as he served Tomatis, and instead of that you almost killed her bravo. She lays the fault on him for having accepted your challenge, but he has resolved to have done with her."

This Count Moszczinski was both good-hearted and quick-witted, and so generous that he ruined himself by making presents. His wounds were beginning to heal, but though I was the indirect cause of his mishap, far from bearing malice against me he had become my friend.

The person whom I should have expected to be most grateful to me for the duel was Tomatis, but on the contrary he hated the sight of me and hardly concealed his feelings. I was the living reproach of his cowardice; my wounded hand seemed to show him that he had loved his money more than his honour. I am sure he would have preferred Branicki to have killed me, for then he would have become an object of general execration, and Tomatis would have been received with less contempt in the great houses he still frequented.

I resolved to pay a visit to the discontented party who had only recognised the new king on compulsion, and some of whom had not recognised him at all; so I set out with my true friend Campioni and one servant.

Prince Charles of Courland had started for Venice, where I had given him letters for my illustrious friends who would make his visit a pleasant one. The English ambassador, who had given me an introduction to Prince Adam, had just arrived at Warsaw. I dined with him at the prince's house, and the king signified his wish to be of the party. I heard a good deal of conversation about Madame de Geoffrin, an old sweetheart of the king's whom he had just summoned to Warsaw. The Polish monarch, of whom I cannot speak in too favourable terms, was yet weak enough to listen to the slanderous reports against me, and refused to make my fortune. I had the pleasure of convincing him that he was mistaken, but I will speak of this later on.

I arrived at Leopol the sixth day after I had left Warsaw,

having stopped a couple of days at Prince Zamoiski's; he had forty thousand ducats a year, but also — epilepsy.

"I would give all my goods," said he, "to be cured."

I pitied his young wife. She was very fond of him, and yet had to deny him, for his disease always came on him in moments of amorous excitement. She had the bitter task of constantly refusing him, and even of running away if he pressed her hard. This great nobleman, who died soon after, lodged me in a splendid room utterly devoid of furniture. This is a Polish custom; one is supposed to bring one's furniture with one.

At Leopol I put up at an hotel, but I soon had to move from thence to take up my abode with the famous Kaminska, the deadly foe of Branicki, the king, and all that party. She was very rich, but she has since been ruined by conspiracies. She entertained me sumptuously for a week, but the visit was agreeable to neither side, as she could only speak Polish and German. From Leopol I proceeded to a small town, the name of which I forget (the Polish names are very crabbed), to take an introduction from Prince Lubomirski to Joseph Rzewuski, a little old man who wore a long beard as a sign of mourning for the innovations that were being introduced into his country. He was rich, learned, superstitiously religious, and exceedingly polite. I stayed with him for three days. He was the commander of a stronghold containing a garrison of five hundred men.

On the first day, as I was in his room with some other officers, about eleven o'clock in the morning, another officer came in, whispered to Rzewuski, and then came up to me and whispered in my ear, "Venice and St. Mark."

"St. Mark," I answered aloud, "is the patron saint and protector of Venice"; and everybody began to laugh.

It dawned upon me that "*Venice and St. Mark*" was the watchword, and I began to apologise profusely, and the word was changed.

The old commander spoke to me with great politeness. He never went to Court, but he had resolved on going to the Diet to oppose the Russian party with all his might. The poor man, a Pole of the true old leaven, was one of the four whom Repnin arrested and sent to Siberia.

After taking leave of this brave patriot, I went to Christianpol, where lived the famous palatin Potocki, who had been one of the

lovers of the empress Anna Ivanovna. He had founded the town in which he lived and called it after his own name. This nobleman, still a fine man, kept a splendid court. He honoured Count Brühl by keeping me at his house for a fortnight, and sending me out every day with his doctor, the famous Styrneus, the sworn foe of Van Swieten, a still more famous physician. Although Styrneus was undoubtedly a learned man, I thought him somewhat extravagant and empirical. His system was that of Asclepiades, considered as exploded since the time of the great Boerhaave; nevertheless, he effected wonderful cures.

In the evenings I was always with the palatin and his court. Play was not heavy, and I always won, which was fortunate and indeed necessary for me. After an extremely agreeable visit to the palatin I returned to Leopol, where I amused myself for a week with a pretty girl who afterwards so captivated Count Potocki, starost of Sniatin, that he married her. This is purity of blood with a vengeance in your noble families!

Leaving Leopol I went to Palavia, a splendid palace on the Vistula, eighteen leagues distant from Warsaw. It belonged to the prince-palatin, who had built it himself.

Howsoever magnificent an abode may be, a lonely man will weary of it unless he has the solace of books or of some great idea. I had neither, and boredom soon made itself felt.

As a rule, the Polish women are ugly; a beauty is a miracle, and a pretty woman a rare exception. At the end of a week of feasting and weariness, I returned to Warsaw.

In this manner I saw Podolia and Volkynia, which were rebaptized a few years later by the names of Galicia and Lodomeria, for they are now part of the Austrian Empire. It is said, however, that they are more prosperous than they ever were before.

At Warsaw I found Madame Geoffrin the object of universal admiration; and everybody was remarking with what simplicity she was dressed. As for myself, I was received not coldly, but positively rudely. People said to my face:

"We did not expect to see you here again. Why did you come back?"

"To pay my debts."

This behaviour astonished and disgusted me. The prince-palatin even seemed quite changed towards me. I was still

invited to dinner, but no one spoke to me. However, Prince Adam's sister asked me very kindly to come and sup with her, and I accepted the invitation with delight. I found myself seated opposite the king, who did not speak one word to me the whole time. He had never behaved to me thus before.

The next day I dined with the Countess Oginski, and in the course of dinner the countess asked where the king had supped the night before; nobody seemed to know, and I did not answer. Just as we were rising, General Roniker came in, and the question was repeated.

"At Princess Strasnikowa's," said the general, "and M. Casanova was there."

"Then why did you not answer my question?" said the countess to me.

"Because I am very sorry to have been there. His majesty neither spoke to me nor looked at me. I see I am in disgrace, but for the life of me I know not why."

On leaving the house I went to call on Prince Augustus Sulkowski, who welcomed me as of old, but told me that I had made a mistake in returning to Warsaw, as public opinion was against me.

"What have I done?"

"Nothing; but the Poles are always inconsistent and changeable. *Sarmatarum virtus veluti extra ipsos.* This inconstancy will cost us dear sooner or later. Your fortune was made, but you missed the turn of the tide, and I advise you to go."

"I will certainly do so, but it seems to me rather hard."

When I got home my servant gave me a letter which some unknown person had left at my door. I opened it and found it to be anonymous, but I could see it came from a well-wisher. The writer said that the slanderers had got the ears of the king, and that I was no longer a *persona grata* at Court, as he had been assured that the Parisians had burnt me in effigy for my absconding with the lottery money, and that I had been a strolling player in Italy and little better than a vagabond.

Such calumnies are easy to utter but hard to refute in a foreign country. At all Courts hatred, born of envy, is ever at work. I might have despised the slanders and left the country, but I had contracted debts and had not sufficient money to pay them and my expenses to Portugal, where I thought I might do something.

I no longer saw any company, with the exception of Campioni, who seemed more distressed than myself. I wrote to Venice and everywhere else, where there was a chance of my getting funds; but one day the general who had been present at the duel called on me, and told me (though he seemed ashamed of his task) that the king requested me to leave the ban in the course of a a week.

Such a piece of insolence made my blood boil, and I informed the general that he might tell the king that I did not feel inclined to obey such an unjust order, and that if I left I would let all the world know that I had been compelled to do so by brute force.

"I cannot take such a message as that," said the general, kindly. "I shall simply tell the king that I have executed his orders, and no more; but of course you must follow your own judgment."

In the excess of my indignation I wrote to the king that I could not obey his orders and keep my honour. I said in my letter:

"My creditors, sire, will forgive me for leaving Poland without paying my debts, when they learn that I have only done so because your majesty gave me no choice."

I was thinking how I could ensure this letter reaching the king, when who should arrive but Count Moszczinski. I told him what had happened, and asked if he could suggest any means of delivering the letter.

"Give it to me," said he; "I will place it in the king's hands."

As soon as he had gone I went out to take the air, and called on Prince Sulkowski, who was not at all astonished at my news. As if to sweeten the bitter pill I had to swallow, he told me how the Empress of Austria had ordered him to leave Vienna in twenty-four hours, merely because he had complimented the Archduchess Christina on behalf of Prince Louis of Württemberg.

The next day Count Moszczinski brought me a present of a thousand ducats from the king, who said that my leaving Warsaw would probably be the means of preserving my life, as in that city I was exposed to danger which I could not expect to escape eventually.

This referred to five or six challenges I had received, and to which I had not even taken the trouble to reply. My enemies might possibly assassinate me, and the king did not care to be constantly anxious on my account. Count Moszczinski added that the order to leave carried no dishonour with it, considering by whom it had been delivered, and the delay it gave me to make my preparations.

The consequence of all this was that I not only gave my word to go, but that I begged the count to thank his majesty for his kindness, and the interest he had been pleased to take in me.

When I gave in, the generous Moszczinski embraced me, begged me to write to him, and accept a present of a travelling carriage as a token of his friendship. He informed me that Madame Binetti's husband had gone off with his wife's maid, taking with him her diamonds, jewels, linen, and even her silver plate, leaving her to the tender mercies of the dancer, Pic. Her admirers had clubbed together to make up to her for what her husband had stolen. I also heard that the king's sister had arrived at Warsaw from Bialistock, and it was hoped that her husband would follow her. This husband was the real Count Branicki, and the Branicki, or rather Branecki, or Bragnecki, who had fought with me, was no relation to him whatever.

The following day I paid my debts, which amounted to about two hundred ducats, and I made preparations for starting for Breslau, the day after, with Count Clary, each of us having his own carriage. Clary was one of those men to whom lying has become a sort of second nature; whenever such an one opens his mouth, you may safely say to him, "You have lied, or you are going to lie." If they could feel their own degradation, they would be much to be pitied, for by their own fault at last no one will believe them even when by chance they speak the truth. This Count Clary, who was not one of the Clarys of Teplitz, could neither go to his own country nor to Vienna, because he had deserted the army on the eve of a battle. He was lame, but he walked so adroitly that his defect did not appear. If this had been the only truth he concealed, it would have been well, for it was a piece of deception that hurt no one. He died miserably in Venice.

We reached Breslau in perfect safety, and without experiencing any adventures. Campioni, who had accompanied me as far

as Württemberg, returned, but rejoined me at Vienna in the course of seven months. Count Clary had left Breslau, and I thought I would make the acquaintance of the Abbé Bastiani, a celebrated Venetian whose fortune had been made by the King of Prussia. He was canon of the cathedral, and received me cordially; in fact, each mutually desired the other's acquaintance. He was a fine well-made man, fair-complexioned, and at least six feet high. He was also witty, learned, eloquent, and gifted with a persuasive voice; his cook was an artist, his library full of choice volumes, and his cellar a very good one. He was well lodged on the ground-floor, and on the first floor he accommodated a lady, of whose children he was very fond, possibly because he was their father. The canon showed me all the letters he had received from the King of Prussia before he had been made canon. He was the son of a tailor at Venice, and became a friar, but having committed some peccadillo which got him into trouble, he was fortunate enough to be able to make his escape. He fled to The Hague, and there met Tron, the Venetian ambassador, who lent him a hundred ducats with which he made his way to Berlin and favour with the king. Such are the ways by which men arrive at fortune! *Sequere deum!*

On the event of my departure from Breslau I went to pay a call on a baroness for whom I had a letter of introduction from her son, who was an officer of the Polish Court. I sent up my name and was asked to wait a few moments as the baroness was dressing. I sat down beside a pretty girl, who was neatly dressed in a mantle with a hood. I asked her if she were waiting for the baroness like myself.

"Yes, sir," she replied, "I have come to offer myself as governess for her three daughters."

"What! Governess at your age?"

"Alas! sir, age has nothing to do with necessity. I have neither father nor mother. My brother is a poor lieutenant who cannot help me; what can I do? I can only get a livelihood by turning my good education to account."

"What will your salary be?"

"Fifty wretched crowns, enough to buy my dresses."

"It's very little."

"It is as much as people give."

"Where are you living now?"

"With a poor aunt, where I can scarce earn enough bread to keep me alive by sewing from morning till night."

"If you liked to become my governess instead of becoming a children's governess, I would give you fifty crowns, not per year, but per month."

"Your governess? Governess to your family, you mean, I suppose?"

"I have no family; I am a bachelor, and I spend my time in travelling. I leave at five o'clock to-morrow morning for Dresden, and if you like to come with me there is a place for you in my carriage. I am staying at such an inn. Come there with your trunk, and we will start together."

"You are joking; besides, I don't know you."

"I am not jesting; and we should get to know each other perfectly well in twenty-four hours; that is ample time."

My serious air convinced the girl that I was not laughing at her; but she was still very much astonished, while I was very much astonished to find I had gone so far when I had only intended to joke. In trying to win over the girl I had won over myself. It seemed to me a rare adventure, and I was delighted to see that she was giving it her serious attention by the side glances she kept casting in my direction to see if I was laughing at her. I began to think that fate had brought us together that I might become the architect of her fortune. I had no doubt whatever as to her goodness or her feelings for me, for she completely infatuated my judgment. To put the finishing stroke on the affair I drew out two ducats and gave them her as an earnest of her first month's wages. She took them timidly, but seemed convinced that I was not imposing on her.

By this time the baroness was ready, and she welcomed me very kindly; but I said I could not accept her invitation to dine with her the following day, as I was leaving at daybreak. I replied to all the questions that a fond mother makes concerning her son, and then took leave of the worthy lady. As I went out I noticed that the would-be governess had disappeared. The rest of the day I spent with the canon, making good cheer, playing ombre, drinking hard, and talking about girls or literature. The next day my carriage came to the door at the time I had arranged, and I went off without thinking of the girl I had met at the baroness's. But we had not gone two hundred paces

when the postillion stopped, a bundle of linen whirled through the window into the carriage, and the governess got in. I gave her a hearty welcome by embracing her, and made her sit down beside me, and so we drove off.

CHAPTER XXI

Castles in Spain

HAVING refurbished his somewhat tarnished laurels with the Polish exploit — which, as he tells us, everyone was asking him to recount — Casanova, after a short visit to Dresden, where his mother, his sister, and his brother Giovanni, director of the state gallery, gave him the prodigal's welcome, resumes his wanderings. His stays in the various capitals become ever shorter. The old hectoring ways with police officers and magistrates, the letters from and to illustrious personages, all the old expedients for ingratiating himself and cutting a dash, are losing their efficacy. The order to "move on" is repeated with almost monotonous regularity. Casanova at forty is a marked man.

While taking the waters at Spa, in Belgium, he runs across his ex-colleague and fellow-reprobate, the notorious Croce, now parading as a marquis with his pseudo-marquise, a young Belgian girl, with whom he had eloped. The story of the hapless Charlotte Lamothe, whom Croce, though knowing himself to be the father of the child she was about to bear, abandoned to his friend's care when disaster overtook him, is one of those "glimpses of reality" which, whenever they occur in the Memoirs, show that their author could respond to calls of genuine distress and at moments, at least, put into practice the chivalry on which he prided himself. This is the brief story of Charlotte[1] *as we find it in the Memoirs:*

To prepare her for the fatal news I asked her if she would approve of her lover exposing himself to assassination for the sake of bidding adieu to her rather than making his escape.

"I should blame him for doing so," she replied. "He ought to escape by all means, if only to save his life for my sake. Has

[1] *M. Charles Samaran publishes in his book on Casanova an extract from the register of the Foundling Hospital in Paris which bears out the truth of Casanova's statements regarding the birth and parentage of Charlotte's child.*

my husband done so? Speak openly to me. My spirit is strong enough to resist even so fatal a blow, for I know I have a friend in you. Speak."

"Well, I will tell you all. But first of all remember this: you must look upon me as a tender father who will never let you want, so long as life remains to him."

"In that case I cannot be called unfortunate, for I have a true friend. Say on."

I told all that Croce had told me, not omitting his last words: "*I commend Charlotte to your care; I would that she had never known me.*"

For a few minutes she remained motionless, as one turned into stone. By her attitude, by her laboured and unequal breath, I could divine somewhat of the battle between love, and anger, and sorrow, and pity, that was raging in the noble breast. I was cut to the heart. At last she wiped away the big tears that began to trickle down her cheeks, and turning to me sighed and said:

"Dear friend, since I can count on you, I am far indeed from utter misery."

"I swear to you, Charlotte, that I will never leave you till I place you again in your husband's hands, provided I do not die before."

"That is enough. I swear eternal gratitude and to be as submissive to you as a good daughter ought to be."

The religion and philosophy with which her heart and mine were fortified, though she made no parade of either, began to calm her spirit, and she proceeded to make some reflections on Croce's unhappy lot, but all in pity not in anger, excusing his inveterate passion for play. She had often heard from Croce's lips the story of the Marseilles girl whom he had left penniless in an inn at Milan, commending her to my care. She thought it something wonderful that I should again be intervening as the tutelary genius; but her situation was much the worse, for she was with child.

"There's another difference," I added, "for I made the fortune of the first by finding her an honest husband, whereas I should never have the courage to adopt the same method with the second."

"While Croce lives I am no man's wife but his, nevertheless I am glad to find myself free."

When we were back in the house, I advised her to send away the servant and to pay his journey to Besançon, where she had taken him. Thus all unpleasantness would be avoided. I made her sell all that remained of her poor lover's wardrobe, as also his carriage, for mine was a better one. She showed me all she had left, which only amounted to some sets of linen and three or four dresses.

We remained at Spa without going out of doors. She could see that my love was a tenderer passion than the love of a father, and she told me so, and that she was obliged to me for the respect with which I treated her. We sat together for hours, she folded in my arms, whilst I gently kissed her beautiful eyes, and asked no more. I was happy in her gratitude and in my powers of self-restraint. When temptation was too strong I left the beautiful girl till I was myself again, and such conquests made me proud. In the affection between us there was somewhat of the purity of a man's first love.

I wanted a small travelling cap, and the servant of the house went to my former lodging to order one. Mercy brought several for me to choose from. She blushed when she saw me, but I said nothing to her. When she had gone I told Charlotte the whole story, and she laughed with all her heart when I reminded her of the bruise on my face when we first met, and informed her that Mercy had given it me. She praised my firmness in rejecting her repentance, and agreed with me in thinking that the whole plan had been concerted between her and her aunt.

We left Spa without any servant, and when we reached Liège we took the way of the Ardennes, as she was afraid of being recognised if we passed through Brussels. At Luxemburg we engaged a servant, who attended on us till we reached Paris. All the way Charlotte was tender and affectionate, but her condition prescribed limits to her love, and I could only look forward to the time after her delivery. We got down at Paris at the Hôtel Montmorenci, in the street of the same name.

Paris struck me quite as a new place. Madame d'Urfé was dead, my friends had changed their houses and their fortunes; the poor had become rich and the rich poor, new streets and buildings were rising on all sides; I hardly knew my way about the town. Everything was dearer; poverty was rampant, and luxury at its highest pitch. Perhaps Paris is the only city where

so great a change could take place in the course of five or six years.

The first call I made was on Madame du Rumain, who was delighted to see me. I repaid her the money she had so kindly lent me in the time of my distress. She was well in health, but harassed by so many anxieties and private troubles that she said Providence must have sent me to her to relieve her of all her griefs by my cabala. I told her that I would wait on her at any hour or hours; and this, indeed, was the least I could do for the woman who had been so kind to me.

My brother had gone to live in the Faubourg St. Antoine. Both he and his wife (who remained constant to him, despite his physical disability) were overjoyed to see me, and entreated me to come and stop with them. I told them I should be glad to do so, as soon as the lady who had travelled with me had got over her confinement. I did not think proper to tell them her story, and they had the delicacy to refrain from questioning me on the subject. The same day I called on Princess Lubomirska and Tomatis, begging them not to take it amiss if my visits were few and far between, as the lady they had seen at Spa was approaching her confinement, and demanded all my care.

After the discharge of these duties I remained constantly by Charlotte's side. On October 8th I thought it would be well to take her to Madame Lamarre, a midwife, who lived in the Faubourg St. Denis, and Charlotte was of the same opinion. We went together, she saw the room, the bed, and heard how she would be tended and looked after, for all of which I would pay. At nightfall we drove to the place, with a trunk containing all her effects.

As we were leaving the Rue Montmorenci our carriage was obliged to stop to allow the funeral of some rich man to go by. Charlotte covered her face with her handkerchief, and whispered in my ear:

"Dearest, I know it is a foolish superstition, but to a woman in my condition such a meeting is of evil omen."

"What, Charlotte! I thought you were too wise to have such silly fears. A woman in childbed is not a sick woman, and no woman ever died of giving birth to a child except some other disease intervened."

"Yes, my dear philosopher, it is like a duel; there are two

men in perfect health, when all of a sudden there comes a sword-thrust, and one of them is dead."

"That's a witty idea. But bid all gloomy thoughts go by, and after your child is born, and we have placed it in good hands, you shall come with me to Madrid, and there I hope to see you happy and contented."

All the way I did my best to cheer her, for I knew only too well the fatal effects of melancholy on a pregnant woman, especially in such a delicate girl as Charlotte.

When I saw her completely settled I returned to the hotel, and the next day I took up my quarters with my brother. However, as long as my Charlotte lived, I only slept at his house, for from nine in the morning till after midnight I was with my dear.

On October 13th Charlotte was attacked with a fever which never left her. On the 17th she was happily delivered of a boy, who was immediately taken to the church and baptized at the express wishes of the mother. Charlotte wrote down what its name was to be — Jacques (after me), Charles (after her), son of Antonio della Croce and of Charlotte de ** (she gave her real name). When it was brought from the church she told Madame Lamarre to carry it to the Foundling Hospital, with the certificate of baptism in its linen. I vainly endeavoured to persuade her to leave the care of the child to me. She said that if it lived the father could easily reclaim it. On the same day, October 18th, the midwife gave me the following certificate, which I still possess.

It was worded as follows:—

"We, J. B. Dorival, Councillor to the King, Commissary of the Chatelet, formerly Superintendent of Police in the City of Paris, do certify that there has been taken to the Hospital for Children a male infant, appearing to be one day old, brought from the Faubourg St. Denis by the midwife Lamarre, and bearing a certificate of baptism to the effect that its name is Jacques Charles, son of Antonio della Croce and of Charlotte de **. Wherefore, we have delivered the above certificate at our office in the City of Paris, this 18th day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1767, at seven o'clock in the afternoon.

"Dorival."

If any of my readers have any curiosity to know the real name of the mother, I have given them the means of satisfying it.

After this I did not leave the bed of the invalid for a single instant. In spite of all the doctor's care the fever increased, and at five o'clock in the morning of October 26th, she succumbed to it. An hour before she sighed her last, she bade me the last farewell in the presence of the venerable ecclesiastic who had confessed her at midnight. The tears which gather fast as I write these words are probably the last honours I shall pay to this poor victim of a man who is still alive, and whose destiny seemed to be to make women unhappy.

I sat weeping by the bed of her I loved so dearly, and in vain Madame Lamarre tried to induce me to come and sit with her. I loved the poor corpse better than all the world outside.

At noon my brother and his wife came to see me; they had not seen me for a week, and were getting anxious. They saw the body lovely in death; they understood my tears, and mingled theirs with mine. At last I asked them to leave me, and I remained all night by Charlotte's bed, resolved not to leave it till her body had been consigned to the grave.

The day before this morning of unhappy memory my brother had given me several letters, but I had not opened any of them. On my return from the funeral I proceeded to do so, and the first one was from M. Dandolo, announcing the death of M. de Bragadin; but I could not weep. For twenty-two years M. de Bragadin had been as a father to me, living poorly, and even going into debt that I might have enough. He could not leave me anything, as his property was entailed, while his furniture and his library would become the prey of his creditors. His two friends, who were my friends also, were poor, and could give me nothing but their love. The dreadful news was accompanied by a bill of exchange for a thousand crowns, which he had sent me twenty-four hours before his death, foreseeing that it would be the last gift he would ever make me.

I was overwhelmed, and thought that Fortune had done her worst to me.

I spent three days in my brother's house without going out. On the fourth I began to pay an assiduous court to Princess Lubomirska, who had written the king, her brother, a letter that must have mortified him, as she proved beyond a doubt that the tales he had listened to against me were mere calumny. But your kings do not allow so small a thing to vex or mortify them.

Besides, Stanislas Augustus had just received a dreadful insult from Russia. Repnin's violence in kidnapping the three senators who had spoken their minds at the Diet was a blow which must have pierced the hapless king to the heart.

The princess had left Warsaw more from hatred than love; though such was not the general opinion. As I had decided to visit the Court of Madrid before going to Portugal, the princess gave me a letter of introduction to the powerful Count of Aranda; and the Marquis Caracedillo, who was still at Paris, gave me three letters, one for Prince de la Catolica, the Neapolitan ambassador at Madrid, one for the Duke of Lossada, the king's favourite and lord high steward, and a third for the Marquis Mora Pignatelli.

On November 4th I went to a concert with a ticket that the princess had given me. When the concert was half-way through I heard my name pronounced, accompanied by scornful laughter. I turned round and saw the gentleman who was speaking contemptuously of me. It was a tall young man sitting between two men advanced in years. I stared him in the face, but he turned his head away and continued his impertinencies, saying, amongst other things, that I had robbed him of a million francs at least by my swindling his late aunt, the Marchioness d'Urfé.

"You are an impudent liar," I said to him, "and if we were out of this room I would give you a kick to teach you to speak respectfully."

With these words I made my way out of the hall, and on turning my head round I saw that the two elderly men were keeping the young blockhead back. I got into my carriage and waited some time, and as he did not come I drove to the theatre and chanced to find myself in the same box as Madame Valville. She informed me that she had left the boards, and was kept by the Marquis de Brunel.

"I congratulate you, and wish you good luck."

"I hope you will come to supper at my house."

"I should be only too happy, but unfortunately I have an engagement; but I will come and see you if you will give me your address."

So saying, I slipped into her hand a rouleau, it being the fifty louis I owed her.

"What is this?"

"The money you lent me so kindly at Königsberg."

"This is neither the time nor the place to return it. I will only take it at my own house, so please do not insist."

I put the money back into my pocket, she gave me her address, and I left her. I felt too sad to visit her alone.

Two days later, as I was at table with my brother, my sister-in-law, and some young Russians whom he was teaching to paint, I was told that a Chevalier St. Louis wanted to speak to me in the ante-chamber. I went out, and he handed me a paper without making any preface. I opened the document, and found it was signed "Louis." The great king ordered me to leave Paris in twenty-four hours and his realm of France within three weeks, and the reason assigned was: "*It is our good pleasure.*"

Having, as he naïvely puts it, "informed all my friends of the great honour his majesty had done me" and declined Madame du Rumain's offer to appeal on his behalf to the king, Casanova bids farewell to France: "Fair and beloved France, that went so well in those days, despite lettres de cachet, *despite* corvées, *despite the people's misery and the king's 'good pleasure,' dear France, where art thou now? Thy sovereign is the people now, the most brutal and tyrannical sovereign in the world . . . ."*

Little has so far been ascertained regarding Casanova's Spanish sojourn, which lasted about a year (from the end of 1767 to the end of 1768). He seems to have spent some time in Madrid and Barcelona and to have been afforded the opportunity of comparing the prisons of Castille with those of Catalonia, from the inside as well as the outside, an opportunity he made the most of by composing his Confutazione della Storia del governo veneto, *an attack on a work by Amelot de la Houssaye which represented the Venetian government in an unfavourable light, hoping by this means to ingratiate himself with the authorities of this city and win his pardon.*

In Madrid he found Raphael Mengs, whom he had known in Rome when his brother was studying under the painter. Mengs, who was then in high favour, appears to have befriended the adventurer at first, and then, finding him incorrigible, to have given him up as a bad job. In Madrid he also met the son of his arch-enemy Manuzzi (also spelt Manucci), the spy who had got him put under The Leads. As the young man happened to be the very intimate friend of the Venetian ambassador, Mocenigo, Casanova was as willing to let bygones be bygones as Manuzzi junior to

make amends for his father's misdeeds, especially as he himself was posing as a count. But Casanova was always his own worst enemy. Having had every proof of young Manuzzi's desire to befriend him, he foolishly behind his back made fun of his assumed title (the Chevalier de Seingalt had a passion for exposing titular frauds!) thereby earning the lasting wrath of the upstart and losing all chance of the ambassador's using his influence on his behalf.

Regarding his lettre de cachet, *Casanova maintains that, far from being anything to his discredit, the fact that he was allowed to leave the kingdom at his leisure (i.e., on November 20th, a fortnight later) and that the order was presented to him by a Chevalier de St. Louis, proves that he was accorded honourable treatment, and not, as his enemies later pretended, shamefully expelled from France.*

*The love-*motif *of this Spanish fantasia — a somewhat conventional "local colour"* motif *of the* Gil Blas *period (the days of* Carmen *were yet to come!) — is furnished by the intrigue with Doña Ignazia, the daughter of the hidalgo-cobbler. It is introduced as follows:*

By way of amusing myself I began to go to the theatre, and to the masked balls which the Count of Aranda had established. They were held in a room built for the purpose, and named *Los Scannos del Peral.* A Spanish play is full of absurdities, but I rather relished the representations. The *Autos Sacramentales* were still represented; they were afterwards prohibited. I could not help remarking the strange way in which the boxes were constructed by order of the wretched police. Instead of being boarded in front they are perfectly open, being kept up by small pillars. A devotee once said to me at the theatre that this was a very wise regulation, and he was surprised that it was not carried into force in Italy.

"Why so?"

"Because lovers, who feel sure that no one in the pit can see them, may commit improprieties."

I only answered with a shrug of the shoulders.

In a large box opposite to the stage sat *los padres* of the Holy Inquisition to watch over the morals of actors and audience. I was gazing on them when of a sudden the sentinel at the door of the pit called out "*Dios!*" and at this cry all the actors and all the audience, men and women, fell down on their knees, and remained kneeling till the sound of a bell in the street ceased to be

heard. This bell betokened that a priest was passing by carrying the viaticum to some sick man. I felt very much inclined to laugh, but I had seen enough of Spanish manners to refrain. All the religion of the Spaniards is in outward show and ceremony. A profligate woman before yielding to the desires of her lover covers the picture of Christ, or the Virgin, with a veil. If the lover laughed at this absurdity he would run a risk of being denounced as an Atheist, and most probably by the wretched woman who had sold him her charms.

In Madrid, and possibly all over Spain, a gentleman who takes a lady to a private room in an inn must expect to have a servant in the room the whole of the time, that he may be able to swear that the couple took no indecent liberties with each other. In spite of all, profligacy is rampant at Madrid, and also the most dreadful hypocrisy, which is more offensive to true piety than open sin. Men and women seemed to have come to an agreement to set the whole system of surveillance utterly at nought. However, commerce with women is not without its dangers; whether it be endemic or a result of dirty habits, one has often good reasons to repent the favours one has obtained.

The masked ball quite captivated me. The first time I went to see what it was like and it only cost me a doubloon (about eleven francs), but ever after it cost me four doubloons, for the following reason: An elderly gentleman, who sat next me at supper, guessed I was a foreigner by my difficulty in making myself understood by the waiter, and asked me where I had left my lady friend.

"I have not got one; I came by myself to enjoy this delightful and excellently-managed entertainment."

"Yes, but you ought to come with a companion; then you could dance. At present you cannot do so, as every lady has her partner, who will not allow her to dance with anyone else."

"Then I must be content not to dance, for, being a stranger, I do not know any lady whom I can ask to come with me."

"As a stranger you would have much less difficulty in securing a partner than a citizen of Madrid. Under the new fashion, introduced by the Count of Aranda, the masked ball has become the rage of all the women in the capital. You see there are about two hundred of them on the floor to-night; well, I should think there are at least four thousand girls in Madrid who are sighing

for someone to take them to the ball, for, as you may know, no woman is allowed to come by herself. You would only have to go to any respectable people, give your name and address, and ask to have the pleasure of taking their daughter to the ball. You would have to send her a domino, mask, and gloves; and you would take her and bring her back in your carriage."

"And if the father and mother refused?"

"Then you would make your bow and go, leaving them to repent of their folly, for the girl would sigh, and weep, and moan, bewail parental tyranny, call Heaven to witness the innocency of going to a ball, and finally go into convulsions."

This oration, which was uttered in the most persuasive style, made me quite gay, for I scented an intrigue from afar. I thanked the masquer (who spoke Italian very well) and promised to follow his advice and to let him know the results.

"I shall be delighted to hear of your success, and you will find me in the box, where I shall be glad if you will follow me now to be introduced to the lady who is my constant companion."

I was astonished at so much politeness, and told him my name and followed him. He took me into a box where there were two ladies and an elderly man. They were talking about the ball, so I put in a remark or two on the same topic, which seemed to meet with approval. One of the two ladies, who retained some traces of her former beauty, asked me, in excellent French, what circles I moved in.

"I have only been a short time in Madrid, and not having been presented at Court I really know no one."

"Really! I quite pity you. Come and see me, you will be welcome. My name is Pichona, and anybody will tell you where I live."

"I shall be delighted to pay my respects to you, madam."

What I liked best about the spectacle was a wonderful and fantastic dance which was struck up at midnight. It was the famous *fandango*, of which I had often heard, but of which I had absolutely no idea. I had seen it danced on the stage in France and Italy, but the actors were careful not to use those voluptuous gestures which make it the most seductive in the world. It cannot be described. Each couple only dances three steps, but the gestures and the attitudes are the most lascivious imaginable.

Everything is represented, from the sigh of desire to the final ecstacy; it is a very history of love. I could not conceive a woman refusing her partner anything after this dance, for it seemed made to stir up the senses. I was so excited at this Bacchanalian spectacle that I burst out into cries of delight. The masquer who had taken me to his box told me that I should see the *fandango* danced by the Gitanas with good partners."

"But," I remarked, "does not the Inquisition object to this dance?"

Madame Pichona told me that it was absolutely forbidden, and would not be danced unless the Count of Aranda had given permission.

I heard afterwards that, on the count forbidding the *fandango*, the ball-room was deserted with bitter complaints, and on the prohibition being withdrawn everyone was loud in his praise.

The next day I told my infamous page to get me a Spaniard who would teach me the *fandango*. He brought me an actor, who also gave me Spanish lessons, for he pronounced the language admirably. In the course of three days the young actor taught me all the steps so well that, by the confession of the Spaniards themselves, I danced it to perfection.

For the next ball I determined to carry the masquer's advice into effect, but I did not want to take a courtesan or a married woman with me, and I could not reasonably expect that any young lady of family would accompany me.

It was St. Anthony's Day, and passing the Church of the Soledad, I went in, with the double motive of hearing mass and of procuring a partner for the next day's ball.

I noticed a fine-looking girl coming out of the confessional, with contrite face and lowered eyes, and I noted where she went. She knelt down in the middle of the church, and I was so attracted by her appearance that I registered a mental vow to the effect that she should be my first partner. She did not look a person of condition, nor, so far as I could see, was she rich, and nothing about her indicated the courtesan, though women of that class go to confession in Madrid like everybody else. When mass was ended, the priest distributed the Eucharist, and I saw her rise and approach humbly to the holy table, and there receive the communion. She then returned to the church to finish her devotions, and I was patient enough to wait till they were over.

At last she left, in company with another girl, and I followed her at a distance. At the end of a street her companion left her to go into her house, and she, retracing her steps, turned into another street and entered a small house, one story high. I noted the house and the street (Calle del Desinjaño) and then walked up and down for half an hour, that I might not be suspected of following her. At last I took courage and walked in, and, on my ringing a bell, I heard a voice:

"Who is there?"

"Honest folk," I answered, according to the custom of the country; and the door was opened. I found myself in the presence of a man, a woman, the young devotee I had followed, and another girl, somewhat ugly.

My Spanish was bad, but still it was good enough to express my meaning, being a stranger, and having no partner to take to the ball, I had come to ask him to give me his daughter for my partner, supposing he had a daughter. I assured him that I was a man of honour, and that the girl should be returned to him after the ball in the same condition as when she started.

"Señor," said he, "there is my daughter, but I don't know you and don't know whether she wants to go."

"I should like to go, if my parents will allow me."

"Then you know this gentleman?"

"I have never seen him, and I suppose he has never seen me."

"You speak the truth, señora."

The father asked me my name and address, and promised I should have a decisive answer by dinner-time, if I dined at home. I begged him to excuse the liberty I had taken, and to let me know his answer without fail, so that I might have time to get another partner if it were unfavourable to me.

Just as I was beginning to dine my man appeared. I asked him to sit down, and he informed me that his daughter would accept my offer, but that her mother would accompany her and sleep in the carriage. I said that she might do so if she liked, but I should be sorry for her on account of the cold.

"She shall have a good cloak," said he; and he proceeded to inform me that he was a cordwainer.

"Then I hope you will take my measure for a pair of shoes."

"I daren't do that; I'm an hidalgo, and if I were to take anyone's measure I should have to touch his foot, and that

would be a degradation. I am a cobbler, and that is not inconsistent with my nobility."

"Then, will you mend these boots?"

"I will make them like new; but I see they want a lot of work; it will cost you a pezzo duro, about five francs."

I told him that I thought his terms very reasonable, and he went out with a profound bow, refusing absolutely to dine with me.

Here was a cobbler who despised bootmakers because they had to touch the foot, and they, no doubt, despised him because he touched old leather. Unhappy pride! how many forms it assumes, and who is without his own peculiar form of it?

The next day I sent to the gentleman-cobbler's a tradesman with dominoes, masks, and gloves; but I took care not to go myself nor to send my page, for whom I had an aversion which almost amounted to a presentiment. I hired a carriage to seat four, and at nightfall I drove to the house of my pious partner, who was quite ready for me. The happy flush on her face was a sufficient index to me of the feelings of her heart. We got into the carriage with the mother, who was wrapped up in a vast cloak, and at the door of the dancing-room we descended, leaving the mother in the carriage. As soon as we were alone my fair partner told me that her name was Donna Ignazia.

We entered the ball-room and walked round several times. Donna Ignazia was in such a state of ecstacy that I felt her trembling, and augured well for my amorous projects. Though liberty, nay, licence, seemed to reign supreme, there was a guard of soldiers ready to arrest the first person who created any disturbance. We danced several minuets and square dances, and at ten o'clock we went to the supper-room, our conversation being very limited all the while, she not speaking for fear of encouraging me too much, and I on account of my poor knowledge of the Spanish language. I left her alone for a moment after supper, and went to the box, where I expected to find Madame Pichona, but it was occupied by masquers, who were unknown to me, so I rejoined my partner, and we went on dancing the minuets and quadrilles till the *fandango* was announced. I took my place with my partner, who danced it admirably, and seemed astonished to find herself so well supported by a foreigner. This dance had excited both of us, so,

after taking her to the buffet and giving her the best wines and liqueurs procurable, I asked her if she were content with me. I added that I was deeply in love with her, that unless she found some means of making me happy I should undoubtedly die of love. I assured her that I was ready to face all hazards.

"By making you happy," she replied, "I shall make myself happy, too. I will write to you to-morrow, and you will find the letter sewn into the hood of my domino."

"You will find me ready to do anything, fair Ignazia, if you will give me hope."

At last the ball was over, and we went out and got into the carriage. The mother woke up, and the coachman drove off, and I, taking the girl's hands, would have kissed them. However, she seemed to suspect that I had other intentions, and held my hands clasped so tightly that I believe I should have found it a hard task to pull them away. In this position Donna Ignazia proceeded to tell her mother all about the ball, and the delight it had given her. She did not let go my hands till we got to the corner of their street, when the mother called out to the coachman to stop, not wishing to give her neighbours occasion for slander by stopping in front of their own house.

During the course of his amours with Donna Ignazia, Casanova was imprisoned for a short time at the fortress of El Buen Retiro, owing, he says, to the malevolence of his Spanish servant, who had denounced him to the alcalde for harbouring weapons. Afterwards Casanova seems to have enjoyed a short hour of popularity. Whatever may be the truth of his alleged intimacy with the great, his portraits of some of the leading personalities of the day, and his keen sense for picturesque details, make interesting reading:

I had not long returned to my lodging when Mengs called for me in his carriage. The ambassador gave me a most gracious reception, and overwhelmed Mengs with compliments for having endeavoured to shelter me. At dinner I told the story of my sufferings at Buen Retiro, and the conversation I had just had with the Count of Aranda, who had returned me my letters. The company expressed a desire to see them, and everyone gave an opinion on the matter.

The guests were Abbé Bigliardi, the French consul, Don Rodrigues de Campomanes, and the famous Don Pablo d'Olavides. Everyone spoke his mind, and the ambassador condemned

the letters as too *ferocious*. On the other hand, Campomanes approved them, saying that they were not abusive, and were wonderfully adapted to my purpose — namely, to force the reader to do me prompt justice, were the reader to be the king himself. Olavides and Bigliardi echoed this sentiment. Mengs sided with the ambassador, and begged me to come and live with him, so as not to be liable to any more inconveniences from spying servants. I did not accept this invitation till I had been pressed for some time, and I noted the remark of the ambassador, who said I owed Mengs this reparation for the indirect affront he had received.

I was delighted to make the acquaintance of Campomanes and Olavides, men of intellect and of a stamp very rare in Spain. They were not exactly men of learning, but they were above religious prejudices, and were not only fearless in throwing public scorn upon them but even laboured openly for their destruction. It was Campomanes who had furnished Aranda with all the damaging matter against the Jesuits. By a curious coincidence, Campomanes, the Count of Aranda, and the General of the Jesuits, were all squint-eyed. I asked Campomanes why he hated the Jesuits so bitterly, and he replied that he looked upon them in the same light as the other religious orders, whom he considered a parasitical and noxious race, and would gladly banish them all, not only from the peninsula but from the face of the earth.

He was the author of all the pamphlets that had been written on the subject of mortmain; and as he was an intimate friend of the ambassador's, M. Mocenigo had furnished him with an account of the proceedings of the Venetian Republic against the monks. He might have dispensed with this source of information if he had read the writings of Father Paul Sarpi on the same subject. Quicksighted, firm, with the courage of his opinions, Campomanes was the fiscal of the Supreme Council of Castille, of which Aranda was president. Everyone knew him to be a thoroughly honest man, who acted solely for the good of the state. Thus statesmen and officials had warm feelings of respect for him, while the monks and bigots hated the sound of his name, and the Inquisition had sworn to be his ruin. It was said openly that he would either become a bishop or perish in the cells of the holy brotherhood. The prophecy was only partly fulfilled. Four

years after my visit to Spain he was incarcerated in the dungeons of the Inquisition, but he obtained his release after three years' confinement by doing public penance. The leprosy which eats out the heart of Spain is not yet cured. Olavides was still more harshly treated, and even Aranda would have fallen a victim if he had not the good sense to ask the king to send him to France as his ambassador. The king was very glad to do so, as otherwise he would have been forced to deliver him up to the infuriated monks.

Charles III. (who died a madman) was a remarkable character. He was as obstinate as a mule, as weak as a woman, as gross as a Dutchman, and a thorough-paced bigot. It was no wonder that he became the tool of his confessor.

At the time of which I am speaking the cabinet of Madrid was occupied in a curious scheme. A thousand Catholic families had been enticed from Switzerland to form a colony in the beautiful but deserted region called the Sierra Morena, well known all over Europe by its mention in *Don Quixote*. Nature seemed there to have lavished all her gifts; the climate was perfect, the soil fertile, and streams of all kinds watered the land, but in spite of all it was almost depopulated.

Desiring to change this state of things, his Catholic majesty had decided to make a present of all the agricultural products for a certain number of years to industrious colonists. He had consequently invited the Swiss Catholics, and had paid their expenses for the journey. The Swiss arrived, and the Spanish government did its best to provide them with lodging and spiritual and temporal superintendence. Olavides was the soul of this scheme. He conferred with the ministers to provide the population with magistrates, priests, a governor, craftsmen of all kinds to build churches and houses, and especially a bull-ring, a necessity for the Spaniards, but a perfectly useless provision as far as the simple Swiss were concerned.

In the documents which Don Pablo Olavides had composed on the subject he demonstrated the inexpediency of establishing any religious orders in the new colony, but if he could have proved his opinion to be correct with foot and rule he would none the less have drawn on his head the implacable hatred of the monks, and of the bishop in whose diocese the new colony was situated. The secular clergy supported Olavides, but the

monks cried out against his impiety, and as the Inquisition was eminently monkish in its sympathies persecution had already begun, and this was one of the subjects of conversation at the dinner at which I was present.

I listened to the arguments, sensible and otherwise, which were advanced, and I finally gave my opinion, as modestly as I could, that in a few years the colony would vanish like smoke; and this for several reasons.

"The Swiss," I said, "are very peculiar people; if you transplant them to a foreign shore, they languish and die; they become a prey to home-sickness. When this once begins in a Switzer, the only thing is to take him home to the mountain, the lake, or the valley, where he was born, or else he will infallibly die."

"It would be wise, I think," I continued, "to endeavour to combine a Spanish colony with the Swiss colony, so as to effect a mingling of races. At first, at all events, their rulers, both spiritual and temporal, should be Swiss, and, above all, you would have to ensure them complete immunity from the Inquisition. The Swiss who has been bred in the country, has peculiar customs and manners of love-making, of which the Spanish Church might not exactly approve; but the least attempt to restrain their liberty in this respect would immediately bring about a general home-sickness."

At first Olavides thought I was joking, but he soon found out that my remarks had some sense in them. He begged me to write out my opinions on the subject, and to give him the benefit of my knowledge. I promised to do so, and Mengs fixed a day for him to come and dine with me at his house.

The next day I moved my household goods to Mengs's house, and began my philosophical and physiological treatise on the colony.

I called on Don Emmanuel de Roda, who was a man of letters, a *rara avis* in Spain. He liked Latin poetry, had read some Italian, but very naturally gave the palm to the Spanish poets. He welcomed me warmly, begged me to come and see him again, and told me how sorry he had been at my unjust imprisonment.

The Duke of Lossada congratulated me on the way in which the Venetian ambassador spoke of me everywhere, and en-

couraged me in my idea of getting some place under Government, promising to give me his support in the matter.

The Prince de la Cattolica invited me to dinner with the Venetian ambassador; and in the course of three weeks I had made a great number of valuable acquaintances. I thought seriously of seeking employment in Spain, as not having heard from Lisbon I dared not go there on the chance of finding something to do. I had not received any letters from Pauline of late, and had no idea as to what had become of her.

I passed a good many of my evenings with a Spanish lady, named Sabatini, who gave *tertullas* or assemblies, frequented chiefly by fifth-rate literary men. I also visited the Duke of Medina-Sidonia, a well-read and intelligent man, to whom I had been presented by Don Domingo Varnier, one of the gentlemen of the king's chamber, whom I had met at Mengs's house. I paid a good many visits to Donna Ignazia, but as I was never left alone with her these visits became tiresome. When I suggested a party of pleasure with her and her cousins, she replied that she would like it as much as I, but as it was Lent and near Holy Week, in which God died for our salvation, it was more fit to think of penance than pleasure. After Easter, she said, we might consider the matter. Ignazia was a perfect example of the young Spanish devotee.

A fortnight after, the king and Court left Madrid for Aranjuez. M. de Mocenigo asked me to come and stay with him, as he would be able to present me at Court. As may be imagined, I should have been only too glad to accept, but on the eve of my departure, as I was driving with Mengs, I was suddenly seized with a fever, and was convulsed so violently that my head was dashed against the carriage window, which it shivered to fragments. Mengs ordered the coachman to drive home, and I was put to bed. In four hours I was seized with a sweating fit, which lasted ten or twelve hours. The bed and two mattresses were soaked through with my perspiration, which dripped on to the floor beneath. The fever abated in forty-eight hours, but left me in such a state of weakness that I was kept to my bed for a whole week, and could not go to Aranjuez till Holy Saturday. The ambassador welcomed me warmly, but on the night I arrived a small lump which I had felt in the course of the day grew as large as an egg, and I was unable to go to mass on Easter

Day. In five days the excrescence became as large as an average melon, much to the amazement of Manucci and the ambassador, and even of the king's surgeon, a Frenchman, who declared he had never seen the like before. I was not alarmed personally, for, as I suffered no pain and the lump was quite soft, I guessed it was only a collection of lymph, the remainder of the evil humours which I had sweated away in a fever. I told the surgeon the history of the fever and begged him to lance the abscess, which he did, and for four days the opening discharged an almost incredible amount of matter. On the fifth day the wound was almost healed, but the exhaustion had left me so weak that I could not leave my bed.

Such was my situation when I received a letter from Mengs. It is before me at the present moment, and I give below a true copy.

"Yesterday the rector of the parish in which I reside affixed to the church door a list of those of his parishioners who are Atheists and have neglected their Easter duties. Amongst them your name figures in full, and the aforesaid rector has reproached me bitterly for harbouring a heretic. I did not know what answer to make, for I feel sure that you could have stopped in Madrid a day longer to discharge the duties of a Christian, even if it were only out of regard for me. The duty I owe to the king, my master, the care I am bound to take of my reputation, and my fears of being molested, all make me repuest you to look upon my house as yours no longer. When you return to Madrid you may go where you will, and my servants shall transport your effects to your new abode.

"I am, etc.,

"Antonio Raphael Mengs."

I was so annoyed by this rude, brutal, and ungrateful letter, that if I had not been seven leagues from Madrid, and in a state of the utmost weakness, Mengs should have suffered for his insolence. I told the messenger who had brought it to begone, but he replied that he had orders to await my reply. I crushed the letter in my hand and flung it at his face, saying:

"Go and tell your unworthy master what I did with his letter, and tell him that is the only answer that such a letter deserves."

The innocent messenger went his way in great amazement.

My anger gave me strength, and having dressed myself and

summoned a sedan-chair I went to church, and was confessed by a Grey Friar, and at six o'clock the next morning I received the Sacrament.

My confessor was kind enough to give me a certificate to the effect that I had been obliged to keep my bed since my arrival *al sitio*, and that in spite of my extreme weakness I had gone to church, and had confessed and communicated like a good Christian. He also told me the name of the priest who had affixed the paper containing my name to the door of the church.

When I returned to the ambassador's house I wrote to this priest, telling him that the certificate enclosed would inform him as to my reasons for not communicating. I expressed a hope that, being satisfied of my orthodoxy, he would not delay in removing my name from his church doors, and I concluded by begging him to hand the enclosed letter to the Chevalier Mengs.

To the painter I wrote that I felt that I had deserved the shameful insult he had given me by my great mistake in acceding to his request to honour him by staying in his house. However, as a good Christian who had just received the Holy Communion, I told him that his brutal behaviour was forgiven; but I bade him to take to heart the line, well known to all honest people, and doubtless unknown to him:

Turpius ejicitur quam non admittitur hospes.

After sending the letter I told the ambassador what had happened, to which he replied:

"I am not at all surprised at what you tell me. Mengs is only liked for his talents in painting; in everything else he is well known to be little better than a fool."

As a matter of fact he had only asked me to stay with him to gratify his own vanity. He knew that all the town was talking of my imprisonment and of the satisfaction the Count of Aranda had accorded me, and he wanted people to think that his influence had obtained the favour that had been shown me. Indeed, he had said in a moment of exaltation that I should have compelled the Alcalde Messa to escort me not to my own house but to his, as it was in his that I had been arrested.

Mengs was an exceedingly ambitious and a very jealous man; he hated all his brother painters. His colour and design were excellent, but his invention was very weak, and invention is as necessary to a great painter as a great poet.

When Mengs was beaten in an argument, instead of acknowledging his defeat, he invariably became brutal and insulting. He died at the age of fifty, and is regarded by posterity as a Stoic philosopher, a scholar, and a compendium of all the virtues; and this opinion must be ascribed to a fine biography of him in royal quarto, choicely printed, and dedicated to the King of Spain. This panegyric is a mere tissue of lies. Mengs was a great painter, and nothing else; and if he had only produced the splendid picture which hangs over the high altar of the chapel royal at Dresden he would deserve eternal fame, though indeed he is indebted to the great Raphael for the idea of the painting.

We shall hear more of Mengs when I describe my meeting with him at Rome, two or three years later.

I was still weak and confined to my room when Manucci came to me, and proposed that I should go with him to Toledo.

"The ambassador," he said, "is going to give a grand official dinner to the ambassadors of the other powers, and as I have not been presented at Court I am excluded from being present. However, if I travel, my absence will not give rise to any remarks. We shall be back in five or six days."

I was delighted to have the chance of seeing Toledo, and of making the journey in a comfortable carriage, so I accepted. We started the next morning, and reached Toledo in the evening of the same day. For Spain we were lodged comfortably enough, and the next day we went out under the charge of a cicerone, who took us to the Alcazar, the Louvre of Toledo, formerly the palace of the moorish kings. Afterwards we inspected the cathedral, which is well worthy of a visit, on account of the riches it contains. I saw the great tabernacle used on Corpus Christi. It is made of silver, and is so heavy that it requires thirty strong men to lift it. The Archbishop of Toledo has three hundred thousand duros a year, and his clergy have four hundred thousand, amounting to two million francs in French money. One of the canons, as he was showing me the urns containing the relics, told me that one of them contained the thirty pieces of silver for which Judas betrayed our Lord. I begged him to let me see them, to which he replied severely that the king himself would not have dared to express such indecent curiosity.

I hastened to apologise, begging him not to take offence at a stranger's heedless questions; and this seemed to calm his anger.

The Spanish priests are a band of knaves, but one has to treat them with more respect than one would pay to honest men elsewhere. The following day we were shown the museum of natural history. It was rather a dull exhibition; but, at all events, one could laugh at it without exciting the wrath of the monks and the terrors of the Inquisition. We were shown, amongst other wonders, a stuffed dragon, and the man who exhibited it said:

"This proves, gentlemen, that the dragon is not a fabulous animal"; but I thought there was more of art than nature about the beast. He then showed us a basilisk, but instead of slaying us with a glance, it only made us laugh. The greatest wonder of all, however, was nothing else than a Freemason's apron, which, as the curator very sagely declared, proved the existence of such an order, whatever some might say.

The journey restored me to health, and when I returned to Aranjuez, I proceeded to pay my court to all the ministers. The ambassador presented me to Marquis Grimaldi, with whom I had some conversations on the subject of the Swiss colony, which was going on badly. I reiterated my opinion that the colony should be composed of Spaniards.

"Yes," said he, "but Spain is thinly populated everywhere, and your plan would amount to impoverishing one district to make another rich."

"Not at all, for if you took ten persons who are dying of poverty in the Asturias, and placed them in the Sierra Morena, they would not die till they had begotten fifty children. This fifty would beget two hundred and so on."

My scheme was laid before a commission and the marquis promised that I should be made governor of the colony if the plan was accepted.

An Italian Opéra Comique was then amusing the Court, with the exception of the king, who had no taste for music. His majesty bore a considerable resemblance to a sheep in the face, and it seemed as if the likeness went deeper, for sheep have not the slightest idea of sound. His favourite pursuit was sport, and the reason will be given later on.

An Italian musician at the Court desired to compose some music for a new opera, and as there was no time to send to Italy I offered to compose the libretto. My offer was accepted, and by the next day the first act was ready. The music was composed

in four days, and the Venetian ambassador invited all the ministers to the rehearsal in the grand hall of his palace. The music was pronounced exquisite; the two other acts were written, and in a fortnight the opera was put upon the stage. The musician was rewarded handsomely, but I was considered too grand to work for money and my reward was paid me in the court money of compliments. However, I was glad to see that the ambassador was proud of me and that the ministers' esteem for me seemed increased.

I often saw the king's gentleman of the chamber, Don Domingo Varnier, another gentleman in the service of the Princess of the Asturias, and one of the princess's bed-chamber women. This most popular princess succeeded in suppressing a good deal of the old etiquette, and the tone of her Court lost the air of solemnity common in Spanish society. It was a strange thing to see the King of Spain always dining at eleven o'clock, like the Parisian cordwainers in the seventeenth century. His meal always consisted of the same dishes, he always went out hunting at the same hour, coming back in the evening thoroughly fatigued.

The king was ugly, but everything is relative, he was handsome compared with his brother, who was terrifically ugly.

This brother never went anywhere without a picture of the Virgin, which Mengs had painted for him. It was two feet high by three and a half broad. The figure was depicted as seated on the grass with legs crossed after the Eastern fashion, and uncovered up to the knees. It was, in reality, a voluptuous painting; and the prince mistook for devotion that which was really a sinful passion, for it was impossible to look upon the figure without desiring to have the original within one's arms. However, the prince did not see this, and was delighted to find himself in love with the mother of the Saviour. In this he was a true Spaniard; they only love pictures of this kind, and interpret the passions they excite in the most favourable sense.

At Madrid I had seen a picture of the Madonna with the Child at her breast. It was the altar-piece of a chapel in the Calle St. Jeronimo. The place was filled all day by the devout, who came to adore the Mother of God, whose figure was only interesting by reason of her magnificent breast. The alms given at this chapel were so numerous, that in the hundred and fifty years since the picture had been placed there, the clergy had

been able to purchase numerous lamps and candlesticks of silver, and vessels of silver gilt, and even of gold. The doorway was always blocked by carriages, and a sentinel was placed there to keep order amongst the coachmen; no nobleman would pass by without going in to pray to the Virgin, and to contemplate those *beata ubera, quæ lactaverunt æterni patris filium.* But there came a change.

When I returned to Madrid I wanted to pay a visit to the Abbé Pico, and told my coachman to take another way so as to avoid the crush in front of the chapel.

"It is not so frequented now, señor," said he, "I can easily get by it."

He went on his way, and I found the entrance to the chapel deserted. As I was getting out of the carriage I asked my coachman what was the reason for the change, and he replied:

"Oh, señor! men are getting more wicked every day."

This reason did not satisfy me, and when I had taken my chocolate with the abbé, an intelligent and venerable old man, I asked him why the chapel in question had lost its reputation.

He burst out laughing, and replied:

"Excuse me, I really cannot tell you. Go and see for yourself; your curiosity will soon be satisfied."

As soon as I left him I went to the chapel, and the state of the picture told me all. The breast of the Virgin had disappeared under a handkerchief which some profane brush had dared to paint over it. The beautiful picture was spoilt; the magic and fascination had disappeared. Even the teat had been painted out; the Child held on to nothing, and the head of the Virgin no longer appeared natural. This disaster had taken place at the end of the Carnival of 1768. The old chaplain died, and the Vandal who succeeded him pronounced the painting to be a scandalous one, and robbed it of all its charm.

He may have been in the right as a fool, but as a Christian and a Spaniard he was certainly in the wrong, and he was probably soon convinced of the mistake he had made by the diminution in the offerings of the faithful.

My interest in the study of human nature made me call on this priest, whom I expected to find a stupid old man.

I went one morning, but instead of being old, the priest was an active, clever-looking man of thirty, who immediately offered

me chocolate with the best grace imaginable. I refused, as was my duty as a stranger, and indeed the Spaniards offer visitors chocolate so frequently at all hours that if one accepted it all one would be choked.

I lost no time in exordiums, but came to the point at once, by saying that as a lover of paintings I had been grieved at finding the magnificent Madonna spoilt.

"Very likely," he replied, "but it was exactly the physical beauty of the picture that rendered it in my eyes unfit to represent one whose aspect should purify and purge the senses, instead of exciting them. Let all the pictures in the world be destroyed, if they be found to have caused the commission of one mortal sin."

"Who allowed you to commit this mutilation? The Venetian State Inquisitors, even M. Barberigo, though he is a devout man, would have put you under The Leads for such a deed. The love of Paradise should not be allowed to interfere with the fine arts, and I am sure that St. Luke himself (who was a painter as you know) would condemn you if he could come to life again."

"Sir, I needed no one's leave or licence. I have to say mass at that altar every day, and I am not ashamed to tell you that I was unable to consecrate. You are a man and a Christian, you can excuse my weakness. That voluptuous picture drew away my thoughts from holy things."

"Who obliged you to look at it?"

"I did not look at it; the Devil, the enemy of God, made me see it in spite of myself."

"Then you should have mutilated yourself like Origen. Your generative organs, believe me, are not so valuable as the picture you have ruined."

"Sir, you insult me."

"Not at all, I have no intention of doing so."

That young priest showed me the door with such brusqueness that I felt sure he would inform against me to the Inquisition. I knew he would have no difficulty in finding out my name, so I resolved to be beforehand with him.

Both my fear and my resolve were inspired by an incident which I shall mention as an episode.

A few days before, I had met a Frenchman named Ségur, who had just come out of the prisons of the Inquisition. He

had been shut up for three years for committing the following crime:

In the hall of his house there was a fountain, composed of a marble basin and the statue of a naked child, who discharged the water in the same way as the well-known statue of Brussels, that is to say, by his virile member. The child might be a Cupid or an Infant Jesus, as you pleased, but the sculptor had adorned the head with a kind of aureole; and so the fanatics declared that it was a mocking of God.

Poor Ségur was accused of impiety, and the Inquisition dealt with him accordingly.

I felt that my fault might be adjudged as great as Ségur's, and not caring to run the risk of a like punishment I called on the bishop, who held the office of Grand Inquisitor, and told him word for word the conversation I had had with the iconoclast chaplain. I ended by craving pardon, if I had offended the chaplain, as I was a good Christian, and orthodox on all points.

I had never expected to find the Grand Inquisitor of Madrid a kindly and intelligent, though ill-favoured prelate; but so it was, and he did nothing but laugh from the beginning to the end of my story, for he would not let me call it a confession.

"The chaplain," he said, "is himself blameworthy and unfit for his position, in that he has adjudged others to be as weak as himself; in fact, he has committed a wrong against religion. Nevertheless, my dear son, it was not wise of you to go and irritate him."

As I had told him my name he showed me, smilingly, an accusation against me, drawn up by someone who had witnessed the fact. The good bishop gently chid me for having called the friar-confessor of the Duke of Medina an ignoramus. He had refused to admit that a priest might say mass a second time on a high festival, after breaking his fast, on the command of his sovereign prince, who, by the hypothesis, had not heard mass before.

"You were quite right in your contention," said the Inquisitor, "but yet every truth is not good to utter, and it was wrong to call the man an ignoramus in his presence. For the future you would do well to avoid all idle discussion on religious matters, both on dogma and discipline. And I must also tell you, in order that you may not leave Spain with any harsh ideas on the Inquisition, that the priest who affixed your name to the church

door amongst the excommunicated has been severely reprimanded. He ought to have given you a fatherly admonition, and, above all, inquired as to your health, as we know that you were seriously ill at the time."

Thereupon I knelt down and kissed his hand, and went my way, well pleased with my call.

To go back to Aranjuez. As soon as I heard that the ambassador could not put me up at Madrid, I wrote to the worthy cobbler, Don Diego, that I wanted a well-furnished room, a closet, a good bed, and an honest servant. I informed him how much I was willing to spend a month, and said I would leave Aranjuez as soon as I heard that everything was ready.

I was a good deal occupied with the question of colonising the Sierra Morena; I wrote principally on the subject of the civil government, a most important item in a scheme for a new colony. My articles pleased the Marquis Grimaldi and flattered Mocenigo; for the latter hoped that I should become governor of the colony, and that his embassy would thereby shine with a borrowed light.

My labours did not prevent my amusing myself, and I frequented the society of those about the Court who could tell me most of the king and royal family. Don Varnier, a man of much frankness and intelligence, was my principal source of information.

I asked him one day whether the king was fond of Gregorio Squillace only because he had once been his wife's lover.

"That's an idle calumny," he replied. "If the epithet of 'chaste' can be applied to any monarch, Charles III. certainly deserves it better than any other. He has never touched any woman in his life except his wife, not only out of respect for the sanctity of marriage, but also as a good Christian. He has avoided this sin that his soul may remain pure, and so as not to have the shame of confessing it to his chaplain. He enjoys an iron constitution, sickness is unknown to him, and he is a thorough Spaniard in temperament. Ever since his marriage he has paid his duty to his wife every day, except when the state of her health compelled her to call for a truce. In such seasons this chaste husband brought down his fleshly desires by the fatigue of hunting and by abstinence. You can imagine his distress at being left a widower, for he would rather die than take a mistress.

His only resource was in hunting, and in so planning out his day that he should have no time left wherein to think of women. It was a difficult matter, for he cares neither for reading nor writing, music wearies him, and conversation of a lively turn inspires him with disgust.

"He has adopted the following plan, in which he will persevere till his dying day: He dresses at seven, then goes into his closet and has his hair dressed. At eight o'clock he says his prayers, then hears mass, and when this is over he takes chocolate and an enormous pinch of snuff, over which his big nose ruminates for some minutes; this is his only pinch in the whole day. At nine o'clock he sees his ministers, and works with them till eleven. Then comes dinner, which he always takes alone, then a short visit to the Princess of the Asturias, and at twelve sharp he gets into his carriage and drives to the hunting-grounds. At seven o'clock he takes a morsel wherever he happens to be, and at eight o'clock he comes home, so tired that he often goes to sleep before he can get his clothes off. Thus he keeps down the desires of the flesh."

"Poor voluntary martyr!"

"He thought of marrying a second time, but when Adelaide of France saw his portrait she was quite frightened and refused him. He was very mortified, and renounced all thoughts of marriage; and woe to the courtier who should advise him to get a mistress!"

In further speaking of his character Don Domingo told me that the ministers had good cause for making him inaccessible, as whenever anyone did succeed in getting at him and asked a favour he made a point of granting it, as it was at such times that he felt himself really a king.

"Then he is not a hard man, as some say?"

"Not at all. Kings seldom have the reputation they deserve. The most accessible monarchs are the least generous; they are overwhelmed with importunate requests, and their first instinct is always to refuse."

"But as Charles III. is so inaccessible he can have no opportunity of either granting or refusing."

"People catch him when he is hunting; he is usually in a good humour then. His chief defect is his obstinacy; when he has once made up his mind there is no changing it.

"He has the greatest liking for his brother, and can scarce refuse him anything, though he must be master in all things. It is thought he will give him leave to marry for the sake of his salvation; the king has the greatest horror of illegitimate children, and his brother has three already."

There were an immense number of persons at Aranjuez, who persecuted the ministers in the hope of getting employment.

"They will go back as they come," said Don Domingo, "and that is empty-handed."

"Then they ask impossibilities?"

"They don't ask anything. 'What do you want?' says a minister.

"'What your excellency will let me have.'

"'What can you do?'

"'I am ready to do whatever your excellency pleases to think best for me.'

"'Please leave me. I have no time to waste.'"

That is always the way. Charles III. died a madman; the Queen of Portugal is mad; the King of England has been mad, and, as some say, is not really cured. There is nothing astonishing in it; a king who tries to do his duty is almost forced into madness by his enormous task.

I took leave of M. Mocenigo three days before he left Aranjuez, and I embraced Manucci affectionately. He had been most kind to me throughout my stay.

After the break with Manucci, Casanova, who, for once, takes the blame on himself, finding himself persona non grata *in Madrid, moves on to Valentia, where he picks up with the infamous Nina, a Venetian courtesan kept by the viceroy of Barcelona. Though warned to be careful, he follows the lady to Barcelona, where to his surprise and disgust he encounters once more his evil genius Passano-Pogamas, the Genoese adventurer who had helped him to dupe the Marquise d'Urfé. Passano, who is also prowling round the golden cage under the guise of a painter, is unmasked by his old confederate (who remembers his treachery on the former occasion) and goes off swearing vengeance. Follows a midnight attack on "Don Jaime" Casanova, who dispatches one of his assailants, is arrested, and passes six weeks in the citadel, where he composes from memory his famous refutation of Houssaye's* History of the Venetian Government.

Although assured on his release that his arrest was due to a misapprehension regarding his passports, "Don Jaime" is none the less requested to leave the country.

When, in January, 1769, he crossed the frontier, he knew that the last of his castles in Spain had vanished for ever.

EPILOGUE

With the vanishing of the mirage vanishes also the Wanderlust. *Henceforth Casanova has but one object in view: make his peace with the* Serenissima — *return to Venice. As a first step in this direction, and as a proof of his good citizenship, he has already composed his* Refutation. *The next thing is to get it published, if possible in Switzerland, which is conveniently near to Venetian territory.*

On his way to Switzerland, Casanova passes through Aix-in-Provence, which at carnival time was the meeting-place of the Provençal nobility. There, besides winning a little money at the tables, he might perhaps get a glimpse of his long-lost Henriette among the merry-makers. It was worth trying.

It was in the old Provençal capital that a curious meeting took place. Hearing one day of the arrival of a male and female pilgrim, said to be high-born Italians, Casanova goes to satisfy his curiosity:

We found the lady sitting in an arm-chair, looking very tired. She was young, beautiful, and melancholy-looking, and in her hands she held a brass crucifix some six inches long. She laid it down when we came in, and got up and received us most graciously. Her companion, who was arranging cockle-shells on his black mantle, did not stir; he seemed to say, by glancing at his wife, that we must confine our attentions to her. He seemed a man of twenty-four or twenty-five years of age. He was short and badly hung, and his face bore all the indications of daring, impudence, sarcasm, and imposture. His wife, on the other hand, was all meekness and simplicity, and had that modesty which adds so much to the charm of feminine beauty. They only spoke just enough French to make themselves understood on their journey, and when they heard me addressing them in Italian they seemed much relieved.

The lady told me she was a Roman, but I could have guessed as much from her accent. I judged the man to be a Neapolitan

or Sicilian. Their passport, dated Rome, called him Balsamo, while she bore the names of Serafina Feliciani, which she still retains. Ten years later we shall hear more of this couple under the name of Cagliostro.

During this visit to Aix the mysterious Henriette for the last time crosses the stage, without revealing her presence. Having caught a chill, Casanova falls dangerously ill and for days lies at death's door. Day and night he is tended by a strange woman, who disappears as soon as he is out of danger. The innkeeper is unable or unwilling to tell him where she came from or who sent her. Haunted by the memory of Henriette, which his illness has served to intensify, he determines to make a last effort to see her. So, on leaving Aix, he tells his coachman to drive to the manor where, six years ago, he had been her unsuspecting guest. To his surprise, he is met at the door by the charitable woman who had nursed him during his illness and who informs him that it was her mistress, Henriette, who had sent her when she had heard of his plight. As for the latter, she was still at Aix, where she had been all the time of his stay there. Doubtless he must have seen her without knowing it. She at least had recognised him. Respecting her incognito, Casanova, after writing her a long letter, which he leaves with the servant, goes on his way. At Marseilles, his first stop, he receives the following letter from Henriette:

"My Dear Old Friend, — Nothing could be more romantic than our meeting at my country-house six years ago, and now again, after a parting of so many years. Naturally we have both grown older, and though I love you still, I am glad you did not recognise me. Not that I have become ugly, but I am stout, and this gives me another look. I am a widow, and well enough off to tell you that if you lack money you will find some ready for you in Henriette's purse. Do not come back to Aix to see me, as your return might give rise to gossip; but if you chance to come here again after some time, we may meet, though not as old acquaintances. I am happy to think that I have perhaps prolonged your days by giving you a nurse for whose trustworthiness I would answer. If you would like to correspond with me I should be happy to do my part. I am very curious to know what happened to you after your flight from The Leads, and after the proofs you have given me of your discretion I think I shall be able to tell you how we came to meet at Cesena, and

how I returned to my country. The first part is a secret for everyone; only M. d'Antoine is acquainted with a portion of the story. I am grateful for the reticence you have observed, though Marcoline must have delivered the message I gave her. Tell me what has become of that beautiful girl. Farewell!"

I replied, accepting her offer to correspond, and I told her the whole story of my adventures. From her I received forty letters, in which the history of her life is given. If she die before me, I shall add these letters to my Memoirs, but at present she is alive and happy, though advanced in years.

After a visit to Turin, where he gathers subscriptions for his forthcoming publication, Casanova, well satisfied with the result, proceeds to Lugano and gets to work:

I spent the whole of the next month in my room, working assiduously, and only going out to mass on feast days, to dine with M. de R **, and to walk with his wife and her child.

At the end of a month my first volume was printed and stitched, and the manuscript of the second volume was ready for the press. Towards the end of October the printer sent in the entire work in three volumes, and in less than a year the edition was sold out.

My object was not so much to make money as to appease the wrath of the Venetian Inquisitors; I had gone all over Europe, and experienced a violent desire to see my native land once more.

Amelot de la Houssaye had written his book from the point of view of an enemy of Venice. His history was rather a satire, containing learned and slanderous observations mingled together. It had been published for seventy years, but hitherto no one had taken the trouble to refute it. If a Venetian had attempted to do so he would not have obtained permission from his government to print it in the States of Venice, for the state policy is to allow no one to discuss the actions of the authorities, whether in praise or blame; consequently no writer had attempted to refute the French history, as it was well known that the refutation would be visited with punishment and not with reward.

My position was an exceptional one. I had been persecuted by the Venetian government, so no one could accuse me of being partial; and by my exposing the calumnies of Amelot before all Europe I hoped to gain a reward, which after all would only be an act of justice.

I had been an exile for fourteen years, and I thought the Inquisitors would be glad to repair their injustice on the pretext of rewarding my patriotism.

My readers will see that my hopes were fulfilled, but I had to wait for five more years instead of receiving permission to return at once.

M. de Bragadin was dead, and Dandolo and Barbaro were the only friends I had left at Venice, and with their aid I contrived to subscribe fifty copies of my book in my native town.

For five years Casanova continued to wander up and down Italy, waiting for the longed-for amnesty, the permission to return to Venice. In Parma, Bologna, Tuscany, Rome, Naples, he passes, lingers, returns, scenting the wind, catching the echoes, gauging his opportunities of making advances towards the desired goal. At Rome, where he spends several months, he finds in Cardinal de Bernis, the French ambassador, a generous and discreet protector, is received in his circle, and pays his way by amusing the distinguished company with the tale of his exploits. His bête noire *for the time being is Voltaire, whom he attacks with tongue and pen on every occasion, with more wit and reason than most of his compatriots. Polemist, apologist, historian, translator, sonneteer, he can even rise to the heights of a religious ode, "On the Redemption," which he delivers before a learned assembly (including, among other princes of the Church, his friend de Bernis), "pouring out a torrent of tears," with the result that "all the Academicians wept."*

In spite of these and other ephemeral successes of the familiar kind — the latter taking place more and more en famille *under the auspices of his complacent ex-mistresses — he feels that it is time to relinquish the rôle of brilliant* jeune premier *and to strive for more substantial honours. Italy, he felt, needed a worthy translation of Homer's* Iliad, *and who was better qualified to give it her than Casanova, who, ever since he left England, had been studying it in the original with increasing delight?*

Florence, of all cities, offering the best facilities for this task, to Florence he goes, resolved to make a final bid for fame and, if not fortune, at least an honourable independence. It was high time; for, as he observes: "All the friends whose purses had been open for me were dead. M. Barbaro, who died this year of consumption, left me in his will only six miserable sequins a month for the rest of my life, and M. Dandolo, who was the only friend that remained to me, could only give me another six sequins."

But it was evidently fated that Casanova and Florence were never to agree for long. Despite his efforts to lead a studious life and avoid the old pitfalls, he was suspected before very long of being connected with a dangerous set of swindlers who had fleeced a young English nobleman, and ordered to leave the Grand Duke's states.

Most of the following year, 1772, is spent at Bologna, where he is heartily welcomed by a former boon companion of his Paris days, Cardinal Brancaforte. "We had met," says Casanova, "at the Lodge of Freemasons, for the members of the Sacred College were by no means afraid of their own anathemas. We had also some very pleasant little suppers with pretty sinners . . . ." For Bologna he has many a good word to say: "the freest town in Italy," where living is cheap and the cult of letters almost universal — not a pretence, as in Florence. Despite the Inquisition, the press is almost free and printing cheap.

While he is busy in Bologna with his literary projects, his friends in Venice are busy trying to obtain his pardon. Finally they advise him to take up his residence as near as possible to the Venetian border, so that the State Inquisitors might satisfy themselves of his good conduct.

Such a hint is as good as a command, and, leaving pleasant Bologna, he makes for Trieste. As he draws nearer to the cradle of his youth, he indulges in some bitter heart-searchings. So at Ancona:

It was in Ancona that I had begun to enjoy life; and when I thought it over, it was quite a shock to find that this was thirty years ago, for thirty years is a long period in a man's life. And yet I felt quite young, in spite of the tenth lustrum so near at hand for me.

What a difference I found between my youth and my middle age! I could scarcely recognise myself. I was then happy, but now unhappy; then all the world was before me, and the future seemed a gorgeous dream, and now I was obliged to confess that my life had been all in vain. I might live twenty years more, but I felt that the happy time was passed away, and the future seemed all dreary.

I reckoned up my forty-seven years, and saw fortune fly away. This in itself was enough to sadden me, for without the favours of the fickle goddess life was not worth living, for me at all events.

My object, then, was to return to my country; it was as if I

struggled to undo all that I had done. All I could hope for was to soften the hardships of the slow but certain passage to the grave.

These are the thoughts of declining years and not of youth. The young man looks only to the present, believes that the sky will always smile upon him, and laughs at philosophy as it vainly preaches of old age, misery, repentance, and, worst of all, abhorred death.

Such were my thoughts twenty-six years ago; what must they be now, when I am all alone, poor, despised, and impotent. They would kill me if I did not resolutely subdue them, for whether for good or ill my heart is still young. Of what use are desires when one can no longer satisfy them? I write to kill ennui, and I take pleasure in writing. Whether I write sense or nonsense, what matters? I am amused, and that is enough.

At Trieste he manages to gain the good graces of the Austrian governor and the Venetian consul, who put him in the way of rendering service to the Venetian government — opportunities he avails himself of to such good effect that he receives a monetary recompense as acknowledgment and encouragement for his work. Here and at Gorizia he composes the first volumes of his history of the Polish troubles (Istoria delle turbolenze della Polonia), *which were then culminating, as he had foreseen, in the partition of that unhappy country.*

At last, on September 10th, 1774, the Venetian consul, Marco Monti, brought Casanova the good news that the newly-elected Council of Ten and the three new Inquisitors had granted his pardon and that he was free to return to Venice. A few days later, in a letter to his friend Count Lamberg, he gives vent to his joy: "I am mad with joy . . . . Never has the dread Tribunal of the State Inquisitors granted a citizen a more ample pardon than the one accorded to me!"

In Venice the return of Casanova was the topic of the day and when he appears at last on the Piazza, the Merceria, the Rialto, as erect, as disdainful, as hawk-eyed as ever, who should say that the world he set out to conquer was not at his feet? Is he not still the friend of the Memmos, the Mocenigos, the Morosinis, the Dandolos, the Grimanis, even, it is hinted, the very private guest of the all-powerful Three, whom he regales with his countless stories, not omitting, needless to say, that already legendary exploit, the escape from The Leads?

The story of Casanova's last Venetian sojourn, lasting over eight years, is not told in the Memoirs, which break off abruptly, while he is still in Trieste, with the characteristic: "Three years later I saw her again at Padua" (he is speaking of the actress Irene). "Her daughter had become a charming girl, and our acquaintance was renewed in the tenderest manner." In the absence of the concluding volumes — whether lost, destroyed, or never written has so far not been definitely ascertained — the chronicle of those years and the ones which followed up to the death of the adventurer has been established, as best it could be, from the notes and correspondence discovered at Dux and elsewhere.

On the one hand, we have the record of Casanova's literary activities, which, during this Venetian period, seem to have been as intense as they were varied, including his translation of the Iliad, *a volume of Venetian anecdotes,* Aneddoti Viniziani, *an account of his famous duel in Poland, entitled* Il Duello, ovvero Saggia della vita di G. C. veneziano, *a theatrical periodical,* Messager de Thalie, *correspondence with the famous scholar Simon Stratico, the ambassador Sebastiano Foscarini, etc. On the other, alas! we have the record, only recently come to light, of less avowable though quite official activities, in the shape of secret reports to the inquisitorial tribunal regarding the corruption of public morality in every form, whether literary, social, or religious. These activities extend over the last two years of his stay in Venice.*

Whether Casanova in the rôle of government spy — "member of the Secret Service" would be the euphemistic modern designation — is more deserving of pity or contempt, depends on the moral evaluation we feel inclined to apply to all or any of his actions. The exhilarating national pastime of trying to adjust the moral balance will scarcely conduce to the pleasure of reading certain documents.

"In 1782," recounts M. Charles Samaran, "there appeared in the book-shops of Venice a small anonymous work entitled Nè amori nè donne, ovvero la stalla d'Augia ripulita. *Unnoticed at first, there was soon a run on the book when it became known that it was a sort of mythological* roman à clef, *full of scandalous disclosures." It was, in fact, a merciless satire on old Grimani, one of Casanova's benefactors. That there had recently been a falling-out between the two was common knowledge. There could be no doubt as to the authorship — the allusions were too transparent — nor probably was it intended that there should be. Had Casanova once*

more yielded to the temptation of biting off his nose to spite his face, or was it his way of extricating himself from a position which had become intolerable, and, at the same time, avenging himself for a forced humiliation? Given the man, either theory is at least admissible.

Casanova's own comment on this incident is as follows: "Either I am not made for Venice, I said to myself, or Venice is not made for me, or both. In this uncertainty, a very disagreeable incident came to my rescue by obliging me to take a decision. I determined to leave my country, much as one gives up a house which pleases one, but where one is obliged to put up with a bad neighbour, who causes trouble and who yet cannot be ejected."

In January, 1783, at fifty-eight years of age, Casanova is once more a wanderer on the face of the earth. After spending some months in Vienna, the return of spring brings a fit of home-sickness. He had sworn, very likely, never to set foot again on the shores of his ungrateful city, for when, in June, he arrives once more in Venice, it is only to be rowed through the canals as far as his house, to gaze at old familiar things — then, without alighting from the gondola, to depart for ever.

Through the Tyrol, Austria, Holland, Belgium, he takes his way as far as Paris, where he arrives in September. If on his last visit he found Paris changed and unfriendly, he finds it now a desert. In the streets, the cafés, not a face to greet him. In vain he scans the theatre-bills — that social register which so far has never failed him — for a familiar name: Coraline and Camille Veronese, those twin stars, whom he and all Paris had worshipped, had set for ever — Silvia Baletti, hardly a memory — her daughter Manon, once his promessa, *already in her grave — her brother, disappeared. That air of Paris, once so light, so sparkling, was now poisoned with politics. The very police seemed to ignore him!*

His brother, the painter François, whose lodging at the Louvre he shared, having agreed with him that Paris was played out as far as the Casanovas were concerned, the two set out for Germany. At Dresden they hold a family council. Berlin, St. Petersburg, Vienna, seem for the moment to offer the best fields for exploiting their several talents. Vienna, which is first tried, proves a lucky choice for François, who quickly obtains the favours of Prince Kaunitz and of the Viennese public, to whom he remained faithful till his death, in 1802.

As for Giacomo, he, too, finally found employment in Vienna, as secretary to the Venetian ambassador Foscarini. For a year all went well and it looked as if the wanderer had at last settled down, when the sudden death of his employer left him once more stranded. In vain he looks for employment, thinks in despair of turning monk —it was not for the first time — then sets out for Berlin in the hope of finding employment at the Academy. Stopping on the way at Teplitz, in Bohemia, he is invited to dine with a young Bohemian nobleman, a descendant of the great Wallenstein — Count Waldstein-Wartenberg, whose acquaintance he had already made at Paris. Aware that the young count took an interest in the occult sciences, Casanova adroitly brought round the conversation to a subject on which he could talk so well, with the result that Waldstein insisted on his paying him a visit at his ancestral castle at Dux, not far from Teplitz. The visit lasted, with short interruptions, for fourteen years.

But though the "Herr Bibliothekar" of Dux castle had inscribed the Inveni portum *over his door, there was as yet no question of* Spes et Fortuna valete! *On the contrary, over his quiet anchorage those twin stars, Hope and Fortune, that he had followed all his life twinkled more brightly than ever. If his "genius," whose mysterious behests had kept him wandering for half a century through the length and breadth of Europe, had decreed that he should moor his barque in this Bohemian backwater, it was for a reason easy to divine — the accomplishment of his destiny, his supreme avatar: Casanova the World-Prophet.*

Here the great work he had been meditating for years, his message to mankind, the fruit of all his labours, was to be brought to light for the delectation of generations to come, the confusion of his enemies, and the vindication — not without considerable material profits to himself — of his own sublime talents. The title of this monument of human science, philosophy, and political wisdom was Icosameron ou Histoire d'Edouard et d'Elisabeth qui passèrent quatre vingts ans chez les Mégamicres habitans aborigènes du Protocosme dans l'intérieur de notre globe, traduite de l'anglois. *It slumbers in six dust-covered volumes in the nirvana of unread masterpieces.*

To console himself for the failure of his magnum opus *— printed partly or entirely at his own expense at Prague — and also as a distraction from his other serious labours, which cover almost every branch of human learning — Casanova began to classify and elaborate the biographical notes he had amassed through his long lifetime.*

As he worked, chuckling to himself at the unbridled licence, the taunting cynicism, the impudent triumphs of his heroes and heroines, real and imagined, the conviction grew on him that the work could never be published.

Writing in 1792 to his friend Opiz, one of his faithful Bohemian admirers, he laughingly admits as much: "Je vous dirai donc à la hâte que je me porte assez bien, que je travaille onze heures par jour à mes mémoires dont je suis au dixième tome. Je ne me repose un peu que lorsque je me vois dans la douce obligation de répondre à mes amis, qui m'honorent d'un commerce épistolaire suivi.—Pour ce qui regarde mes mémoires, plus l'ouvrage avance, plus je me vois convaincu qu'il est fait pour être brûlé. Par là vous voyés que tant que j'en serai le maître, il ne verra certainement pas le jour. Il est d'une nature qu'il fait passer la nuit au lecteur, mais le *Cinisme*, que j'y ai mis, est outré et il passe les bornes que la convenance a mis à la discretion. Mais vous ne sauriés croire combien cela m'amuse. Je me suis aperçu *sans rougir* que je m'aime plus que personne, mais notés, que je rougis de ce que je ne rougis pas, et cette érubescence secondaire me justifie vis-à-vis de moi-même, car des autres je ne me soucie pas . . . ."

But Opiz, Count Maximilian Lamberg, and Count Waldstein's uncle, the Prince de Ligne, as representative and enlightened a tribunal of contemporary taste as any writer could wish, were of a different opinion. Already the successful publication of Histoire de ma Fuite (*the* Escape from The Leads), *which had preceded that of the unlucky* Icosameron, *had whetted the appetite of these and many other connoisseurs for a full account of Casanova's adventures, which for years had been one of the major themes of European gossip.*

It is to the encouragement and solicitude of these faithful friends that we owe the composition and, probably, the conservation of those famous Memoirs, which, for all their aberrations, constitute one of the most curious and fascinating documents bearing on the life of pre-revolutionary Europe.

Under what conditions this work and the many others composed by the indefatigable librarian at Dux were carried out can be seen from the following sketch given by Mr. Arthur Machen in the Appendix to his English version of the Memoirs:

"As the Prince de Ligne (from whose Memoirs we learn these particulars) remarks, Casanova's life had been a stormy and adven-

turous one, and it might have been expected that he would have found his patron's library a pleasant refuge after so many toils and travels. But the man carried rough weather and storm in his own heart, and found daily opportunities of mortification and resentment. The coffee was ill made, the macaroni not cooked in the true Italian style, the dogs bayed during the night, he had been made to dine at a small table, the parish priest had tried to convert him, the soup had been served too hot on purpose to annoy him, he had not been introduced to a distinguished guest, the count had lent a book without telling him, a groom had not taken off his hat; such were his complaints. The fact is Casanova felt his dependent position and his utter poverty, and was all the more determined to stand to his dignity as a man who had talked with all the crowned heads of Europe, and had fought a duel with the Polish general. And he had another reason for finding life bitter — he had lived beyond his time. Louis XV. was dead, and Louis XVI. had been guillotined; the Revolution had come; and Casanova, his dress, and his manners, appeared as odd and antique as some 'blood' of the Regency would appear to us of these days. Sixty years before, Marcel, the famous dancing-master, had taught young Casanova how to enter a room with a lowly and ceremonious bow; and still, though the eighteenth century is drawing to a close, old Casanova enters the rooms of Dux with the same stately bow, and now everyone laughs. Old Casanova treads the grave measures of the minuet; they applauded his dancing once, but now everyone laughs. Young Casanova was always dressed in the height of the fashion; but the age of powder, wigs, velvets, and silks has departed, and old Casanova's attempts at elegance ('Strass' diamonds have replaced the genuine stones with him) are likewise greeted with laughter. No wonder the old adventurer denounces the whole house as Jacobins and canaille; the world, he feels, is permanently out of joint for him; everything is cross, and everyone is in a conspiracy to drive the iron into his soul.

"At last these persecutions, real or imaginary, drive him away from Dux; he considers his genius bids him go, and, as before, he obeys. Casanova has but little pleasure or profit out of this his last journey; he has to dance attendance in ante-chambers; no one will give him any office, whether as tutor, librarian, or chamberlain. In one quarter only is he well received — namely, by the famous Duke of Weimar; but in a few days he becomes madly jealous of the duke's more famous protégés, *Goethe and Wieland, and goes off*

declaiming against them and German literature generally — with which literature he was wholly unacquainted. From Weimar to Berlin; where there are Jews to whom he has introductions. Casanova thinks them ignorant, superstitious, and knavish; but they lend him money, and he gives bills on Count Wallenstein, which are paid. In six weeks the wanderer returns to Dux, and is welcomed with open arms; his journeys are over at last.

"*But not his troubles. A week after his return there are strawberries at dessert; everyone is served before himself, and when the plate comes round to him it is empty. Worse still; his portrait is missing from his room, and is discovered* salement placardé à la porte des lieux d'aisance!

"*Five more years of life remained to him. They were passed in such petty mortifications as we have narrated, in grieving over his* affreuse vieillesse, *and in laments over the conquest of his native land Venice, once so splendid and powerful. His appetite began to fail, and with it failed his last source of pleasure. So death came to him somewhat as a release. He received the sacraments with devotion, exclaimed:*

" 'Grand Dieu, et vous tous témoins de ma mort, j'ai vécu en philosophe, et je meurs en Chrétien,' *and so died.*

"*The Prince de Ligne draws the following portrait under the name of Adventuros:*

" '*He would be a handsome man if he were not ugly; he is tall and strongly built, but his dark complexion and his glittering eyes give him a fierce expression. He is easier to annoy than amuse; he laughs little but makes others laugh by the peculiar turn he gives to his conversation. He knows everything except those matters on the knowledge of which he chiefly prides himself — namely, dancing, the French language, good taste, and knowledge of the world. Everything about him is comic, except his comedies; and all his writings are philosophical, saving those which treat of philosophy. He is a perfect well of knowledge, but he quotes Homer and Horace* ad nauseam.' "

A NOTE ON THE TYPE IN WHICH THIS BOOK IS SET

This Book has been set, (on the Monotype,) in Suburban French type. This series was cut at the suggestion of J. Horace McFarland of the Mount Pleasant Press, who was impressed with its appearance in a French book. The Roman bears a marked resemblance to the letter of Philippe Grand jean (Royal Printer to Louis XIV) as shown in a magnificent folio printed by Grand jean at the Imprimerie Royale, Paris, 1702, but the basic design was probably originated by the Didot foundry, famous printers of Paris (circa. 1713–1800). Suburban French is classified as an Old Style letter, but possesses many modern characteristics, and is transitional in feeling.

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